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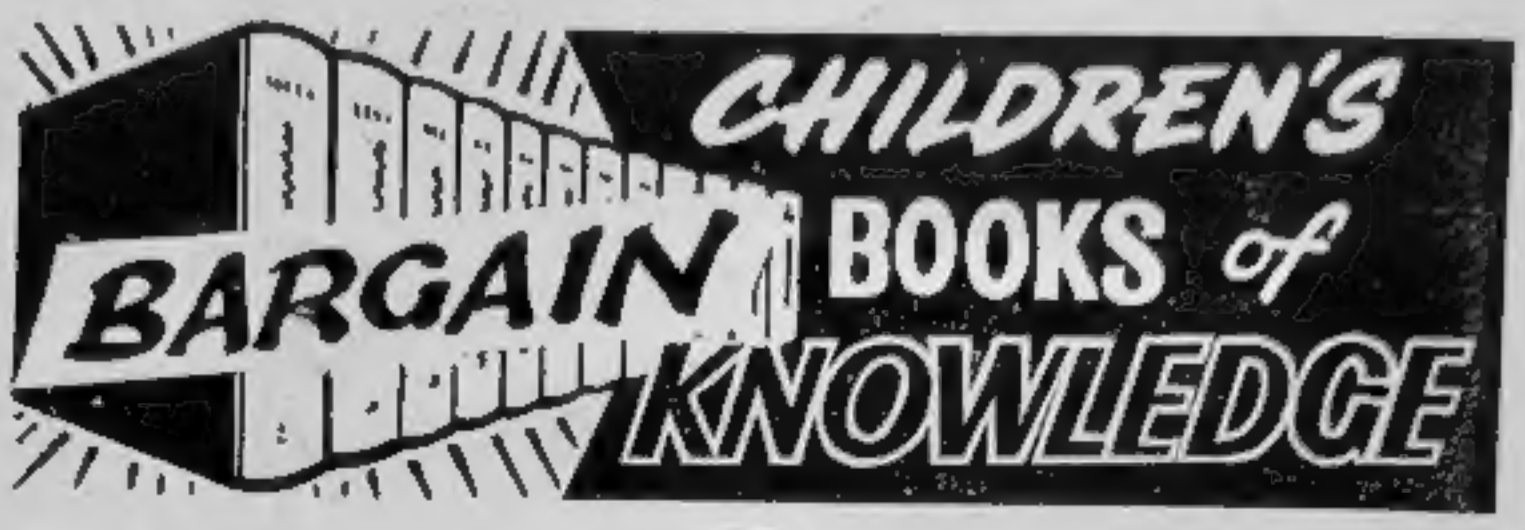

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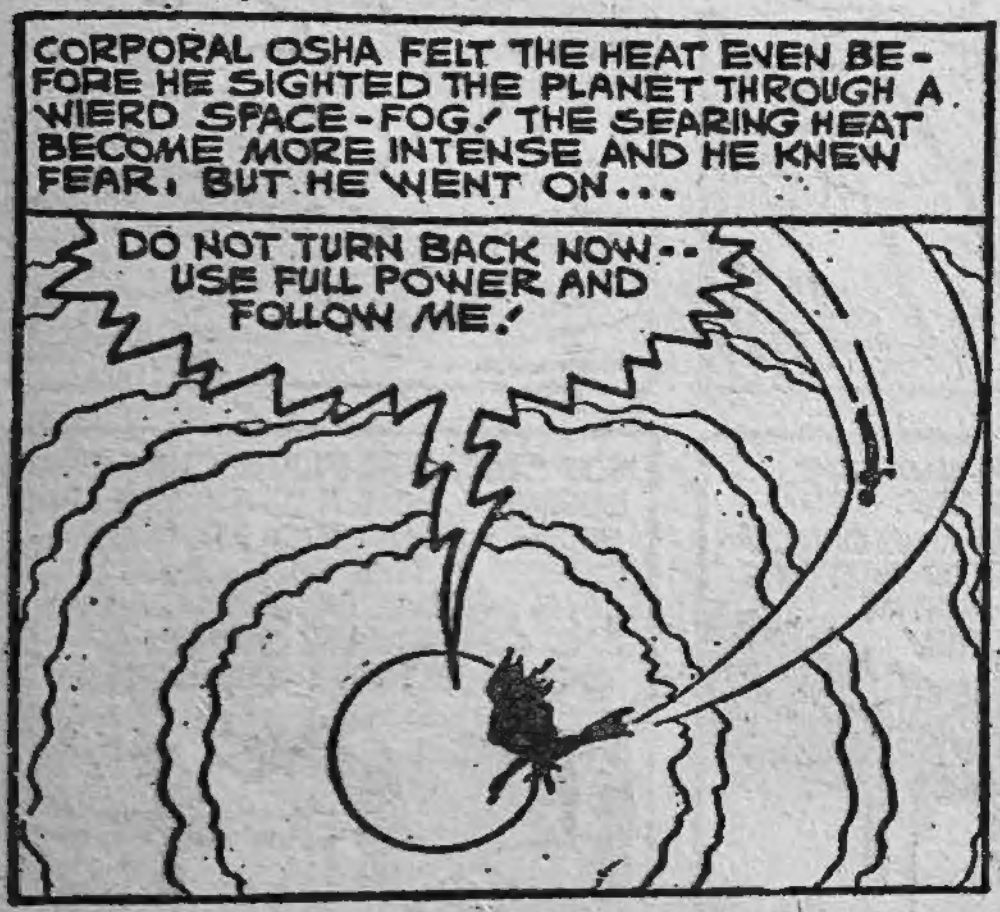
THE WORLD OF THE FIREBIRDS

COMMANDER, EARTH GALAXY, GAVE SPECIFIC ORDERS TO THE OUTER FRINGE PATROL... IF ANY OF THE WEIRD ONES WERE ENCOUNTERED OUT PAST THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE, THEY WERE NOT TO BE HARMED! *UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES* WAS AN OVERT MOVE AGAINST THE RED WINGED BEINGS TO BE MADE! YET, CAPTAIN GALAGR WAS IN TROUBLE... AND SPACE CORPORAL VIN OSHA HAD TO SAVE HIM!

THE HUGE PREDATOR OF OUTER SPACE ARROWED ON COSMIC WINGS TOWARD THE NEBULAE BEYOND THE KNOWN GALAXIES! AND BEHIND HIM, EXHAUSTING HIS NUCLEAR-POWERED JETS, SPACE CORPORAL OSHA FOLLOWED WITHOUT HOPE...

I'VE GOT TO TRY AND SAVE COMMANDER GALAGR... EVEN THOUGH I'LL FAIL!

NO, EARTHLING, YOU WILL NOT PERISH! WE ARE ALMOST AT OUR DESTINATION... STAY NEAR AND HAVE FAITH!


CORPORAL OSHA FELT THE HEAT EVEN BEFORE HE SIGHTED THE PLANET THROUGH A WIERD SPACE-FOG! THE SEARING HEAT BECOME MORE INTENSE AND HE KNEW FEAR, BUT HE WENT ON...
DO NOT TURN BACK NOW-- USE FULL POWER AND FOLLOW ME!

HOTTER...HOTTER...UNTIL OSHA'S VERY BONES ACHED WITH THE HEAT...

THIS IS THE END... POOR COMMANDER GALAGR... HE'S DONE FOR TOO!

HE DONE THROUGH UNBEARABLE HEAT... AND INTO A MAGICAL COOLNESS, A PLACE OF COMFORT, DIM AFTER THE TERRIFIC SURFACE GLARE...
LAND NEAR THE LARGEST BUILDING, EARTHLING! YOU ARE SAFE NOW!

YOU SEE, EARTHLING, YOU HAD NOTHING TO FEAR, AS I PROMISED!

YOU PROMISED? THAT RED THING PROMISED I'D BE SAFE!
EXACTLY, AND I AM THAT RED THING AS YOU CALL ME! IT WILL BE EXPLAINED TO YOU LATER...BUT, COME, YOU MUST BE HUNGRY!

CORPORAL OSHA FOLLOWED HIS ODD HOST TO A SMALL GOLDEN BUILDING -- INTO SHEER LUXURY...
IS THAT FOOD?
IT IS! WE HAVE STUDIED THE NEEDS OF YOU EARTHLINGS, THEY ARE EXACTLY LIKE OURS HERE ON NOOM!

WHERE'S COMMANDER GALAGR?
I TOO AWAIT WORD OF YOUR COMMANDER, OSHA! MEANWHILE, LET US INGEST THESE DELICACIES OF NOOM!

THERE ARE A FEW MINOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUR PEOPLES AND OURS! THE FIRE-BIRDS THAT WE USE IS ONE VASTLY IMPORTANT ONE!

YOU SEE, OUR PLANET HAS BEEN BURNING FOR EONS! WE LIVE HERE IN THE COOLER UNDER-CRUST! THE FIRE-BIRDS LIVE ABOVE IN THE HEAT AND CAN FLY IN SPACE! SO, WE PUNY BEINGS...

...HAVE EACH ENTERED THE MINDS OF THE PECULIAR ANIMALS! EACH PERSON ON THIS PLANET HAS A CAPTIVE IN WHICH HE LIVES ABOVE IN THE FLAMES AND IN THE AIRLESS REGIONS OF SPACE!

WE HAVE NO METHODS OF TRAVELING TO FAR GALAXIES SUCH AS YOU POSSESS! THE RANGE OF OUR CAPTIVE FIRE-BIRDS IS SHORT... A FEW MILLION MILES IS THE FURTHEST WE'VE BEEN! SO, FOR CENTURIES, WE HAVE WAITED FOR YOU TO COME TO US!

CORPORAL OSHA HAD A QUESTION TO ASK... BUT HE DIDN'T SPEAK; FOR COMMANDER GALAGR HAD JUST ARRIVED! HE SEEMED VERY PALE...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?
I AM NOW, OSHA! BUT, OUT THERE, I WASN'T! JUST AS THE RED THING APPEARED, MY OXYGEN SUPPLY FAILED...

I THOUGHT I WAS DOOMED WHEN THE CREATURE SEIZED ME AND BEGAN FLYING HERE! SOMEHOW, SOME FORCE KEPT ME ALIVE... TILL THE VERY LEARNED PHYSICIANS HERE USED STRANGE MEDICINES TO AFFECT A CURE...

THE TWO EARTHLINGS WERE FED AND RESTED, THEN, ON AWAKENING, WERE TAKEN ON A TOUR OF THE STRANGE PLANET....
YOU SEE, OUR SOLE SOURCE OF POWER IS THE BURNING SURFACE! ALL OUR MACHINERY CONVERTS THE HEAT INTO USEFUL ENERGY TO RUN OUR CIVILIZATION! YOU UNDERSTAND?

I UNDERSTAND... AND I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU AROUND MY PLANET ONE DAY SOON!
FATHER SAYS IT IS POSSIBLE NOW THAT CONTACT IS ESTABLISHED!

COMMANDER GALAGR, CORPORAL OSHA, AND THE LEADING SCIENTISTS HAD A MEETING...

OUR NUCLEAR-JETS ARE USELESS, GENTLEMEN! NEITHER OF US CAN LEAVE THIS PLANET USING THE POWER WE HAVE LEFT OUR SHIP WITH!

WE MUST GET YOU BACK TO YOUR SHIP! THE PEOPLE OF NOOM HAVE WAITED CENTURIES TO COMMUNICATE WITH EARTH!

YOU SEE, EARTHLINGS, WE HAVE THE GIFT OF THOUGHT PROJECTION... AND WE READ THOUGHTS FROM ANYWHERE AT ANY DISTANCE!

AT THIS INSTANT, YOUR SPACE SHIP IS ONLY EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND MILES DISTANT! ONE OF OUR FIREBIRDS CAN EASILY REACH IT... OR *TWO*!

I UNDERSTAND... BUT CAN WE DO IT?

YES, THESE FIREBIRDS ARE WAITING... WE WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO ENTER THEIR MINDS, BECOME THE BRAIN OF THE CREATURES!

IT TOOK EXHAUSTING MENTAL EFFORT... BUT HOURS LATER, TWO CREATURES OF THE FIRES LOFTED UP THROUGH THE FLAMES INTO SPACE...

I'LL LEAD, CORPORAL! IT'LL BE TICKLISH WORK APPROACHING OUR PATROL CRAFT!

THE SPACE SHIP'S CREW SPOTTED THE FIRE-BIRDS IN THE HUGE RADAR-PIX-SCOPE...
HEY, SKIPPER, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

THEY'RE COMING RIGHT AT US! MAN THE HEAT-RAYS!
THEY'LL USE THE HEAT-RAYS AGAINST US, OSHA! THINK THESE CRITTERS CAN STAND 10,000° CENTIGRADE?

IT'S HOT, COMMANDER, BUT WE'RE STILL ALL RIGHT!

THE STARTLED CREW OF THE SPACE SHIP WATCHED THE BIRDS SURVIVE THE HEAT-RAY... THE COMMANDER GALAGR PROJECTED A MESSAGE TO THE SPACE CAPTAIN...
CAPTAIN, THIS IS COMMANDER GALAGR! I'M THE RED BIRD YOU BOYS JUST TRIED TO FRY! LAY OFF, WE'VE GOT TO TALK!

THE BIRD SEEMS TO HAVE SOME CONNECTION WITH COMMANDER GALAGR! EXPLAIN THIS, COMMANDER!
WE'LL EXPLAIN LATER IF YOU'LL FOLLOW US, CAPTAIN!

THE GREAT RED CREATURES OF SPACE ARROWED TOWARD THE BURNING PLANET! IN THE SPACE SHIP, THE CAPTAIN WAS UNCERTAIN...
DON'T WORRY, CAPTAIN, APPLY FULL POWER-- YOU'LL GET THROUGH THE HEAT ALL RIGHT--ONCE BELOW THE CRUST IN AN OPEN CAVERN, YOU'LL BE COMFORTABLE!

THAT'S IT, CAPTAIN! I'LL BE WAITING WHEN YOU STEP OUT OF THE SHIP! TELL THE CREW TO GET READY FOR A FEAST, THIS IS A GREAT DAY FOR THE TWO WORLDS!

THE MEN OF EARTH WERE GIVEN A ROYAL WELCOME...

THIS DAY WILL MARK THE BEGINNING OF A GREAT NEW FRIENDSHIP FOR BOTH OUR PEOPLES!
I'M SURE IT WILL! IF FACT, SPACE CORPORAL OSHA HAS ALREADY BEGUN INSURING A PERMANENT FRIENDSHIP!

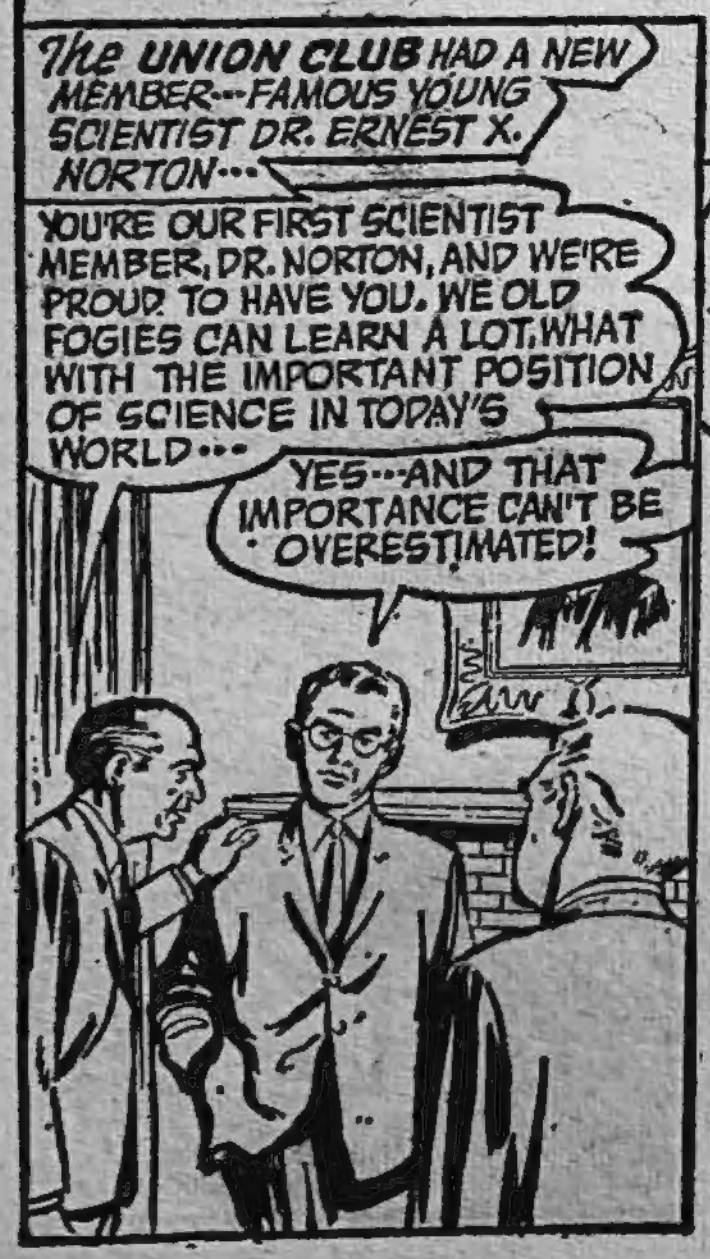
END

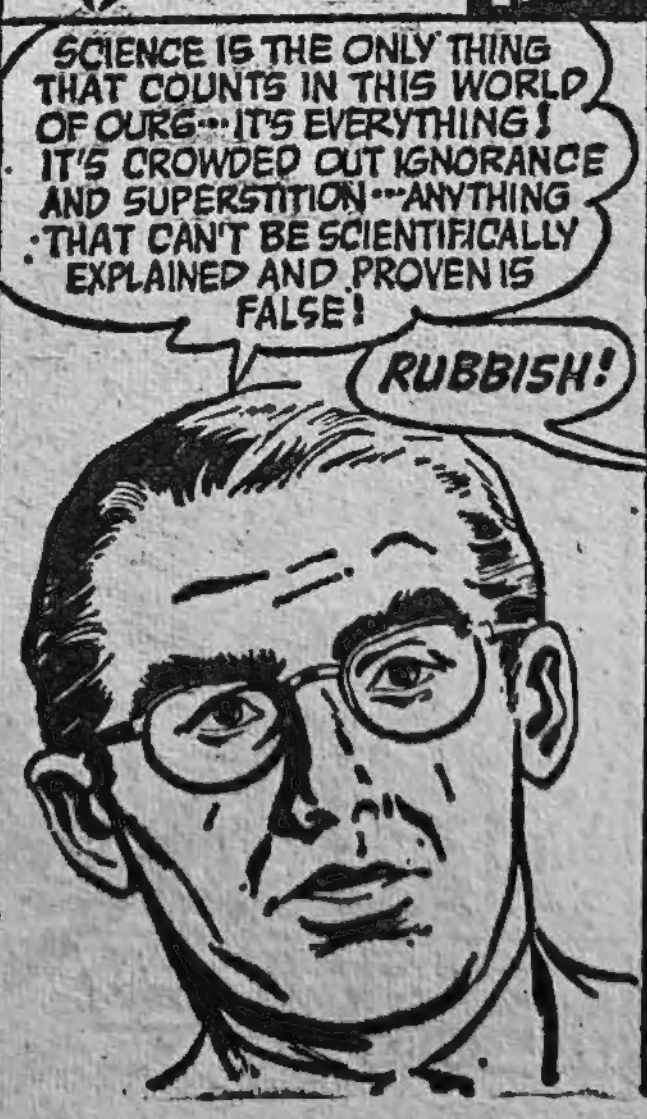
DR. ERNEST X. NORTON WAS A SCIENTIST FROM THE WORD GO, AND BELIEVED NOTHING THAT COULDN'T BE PROVED---SCIENTIFICALLY! HE WAS IN FOR A SURPRISE---AND YOU'LL BE, TOO---WHEN HE FINALLY MET THAT---

MAN of MAGIC!

STORY by ZEV ZIMMER

ART by JOHN R.





AND SO OLD ANDREW MORHARDT HAD HIS SAY---

HOW ABOUT THE PAST, WHEN SCIENCE DIDN'T EXIST? HOW ABOUT---MAGIC?

MAGIC? YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

OH, CAN'T I! THERE ISN'T ONE OF YOU WHO HASN'T HEARD OF STROMBOLI---THE 16TH CENTURY ITALIAN METAPHYSICIAN! I'VE MADE A STUDY OF THE MAN, AND HE WAS GREAT. HE HAD POWERS THAT CAN'T BE EXPLAINED BY SCIENCE---BUT CAN'T BE DENIED!

"STROMBOLI BOASTED ABOUT BEING A MALE WITCH! AND IT WASN'T JUST TALK---HE WAS READY TO BACK IT UP---"

THERE ARE MANY OF YOU WHO CALL ME A CHARLATAN, WHO DOUBT MY POWERS. I STAND READY TO PROVE THEM---TO MY CHIEF DOUBTER!

THAT'LL BE ME!

"HE HAD ONLY TO TOUCH HIM WITH HIS MAGIC WAND---AND---"

HE---HE'S DISAPPEARED!

POUF!

"WHEN HIS NATIVE CITY WAS ATTACKED, THE MILITARY SENT FOR STROMBOLI, KNOWING HIS REPUTATION---"

THE ENEMY IS HIDDEN IN THAT FOREST!

THEN---WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

ONCE MORE, A WAVE OF HIS WAND---

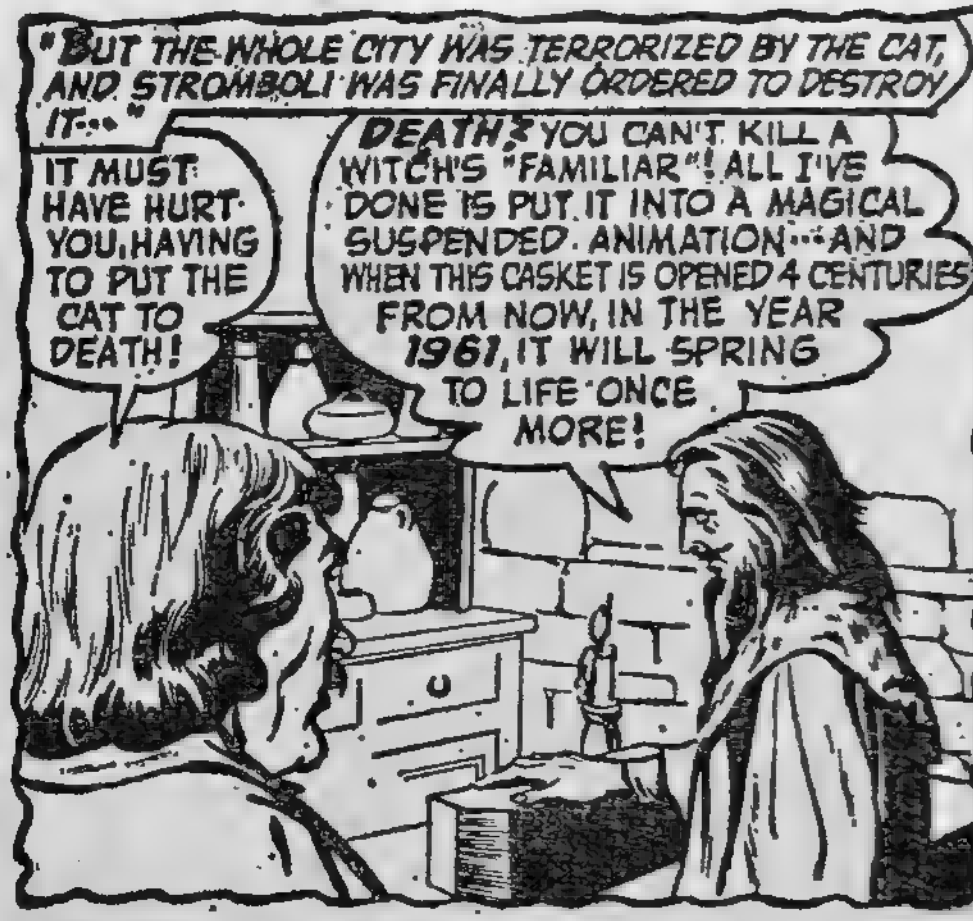
---AND THE FOREST BURST INTO FLAMES! NOT A MAN OF THE ENEMY ESCAPED!"

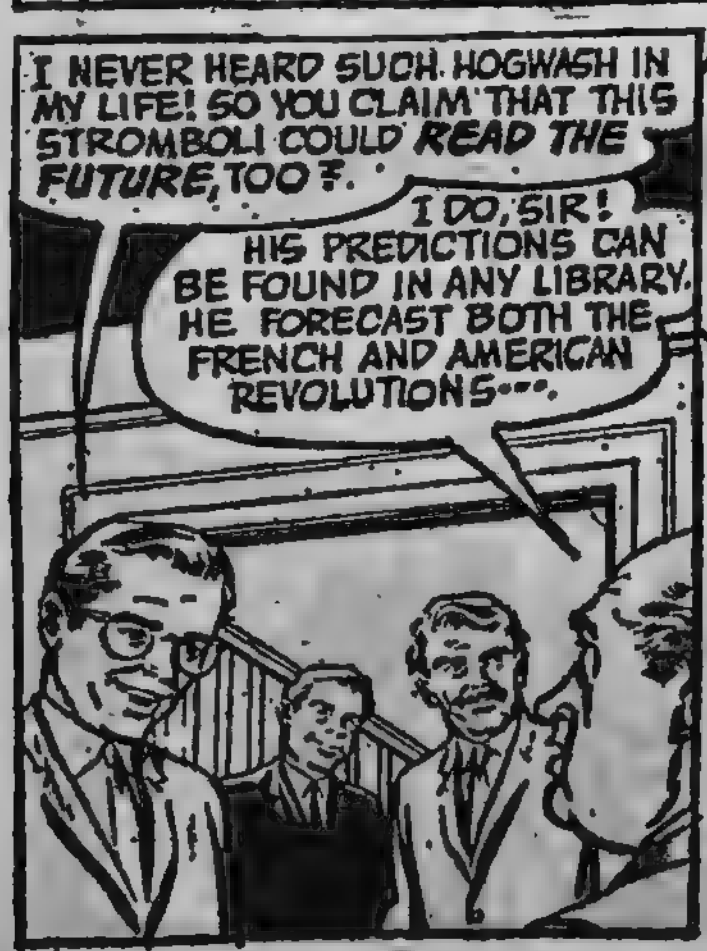
"BUT HE COULD DO MORE THAN JUST CREATE FIRE. WHEN THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR TO HIS COMMENCED TO BURN---"

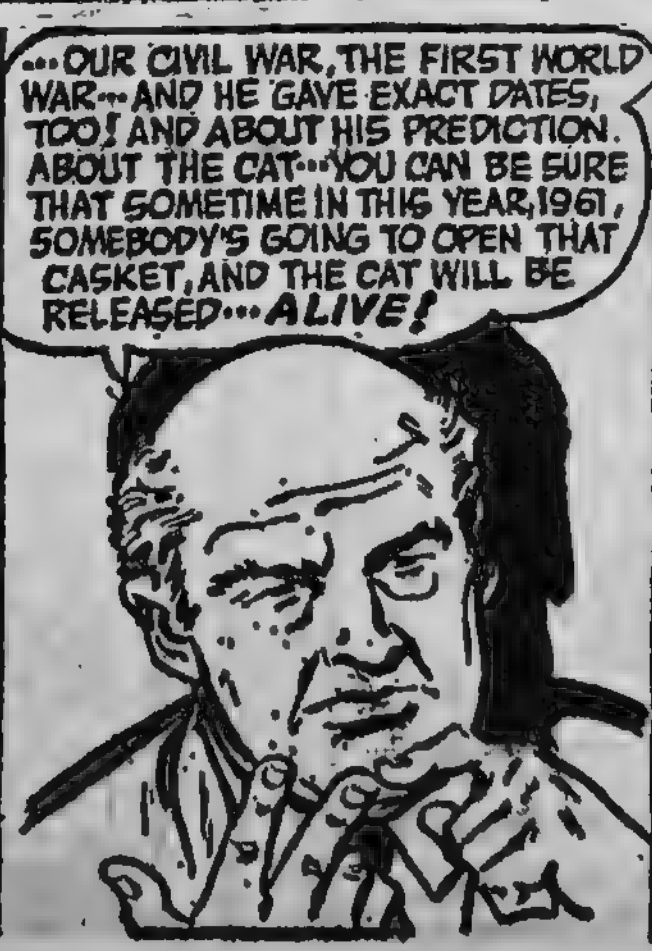
"HE SUMMONED DOWN A CLOUDBURST, DIRECTED ONLY AGAINST THE FIRE!"

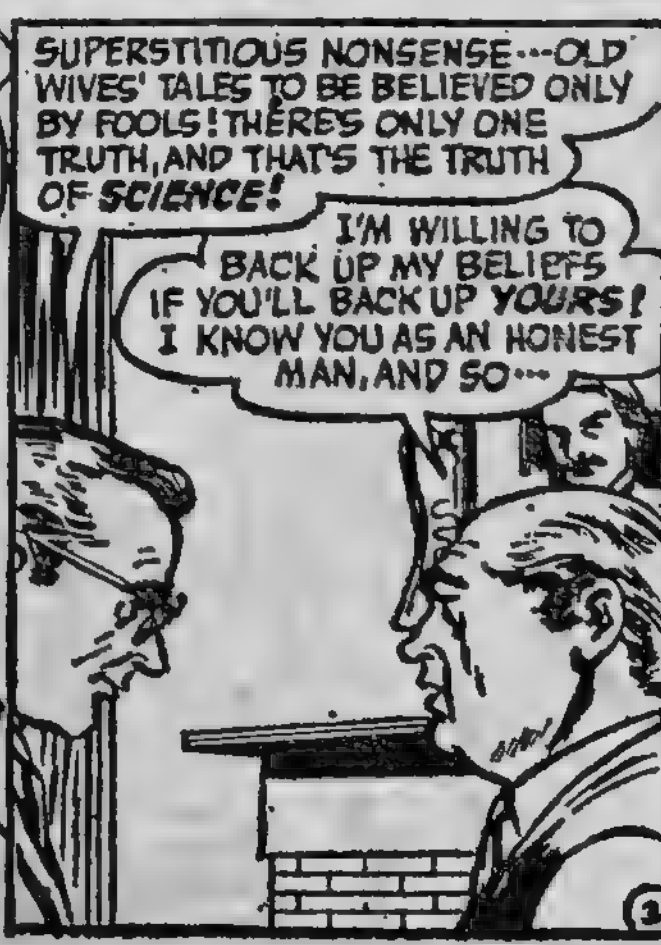
"HE WAS SELDOM SEEN WITHOUT HIS "FAMILIAR SPIRIT", A HUGE BLACK CAT···"

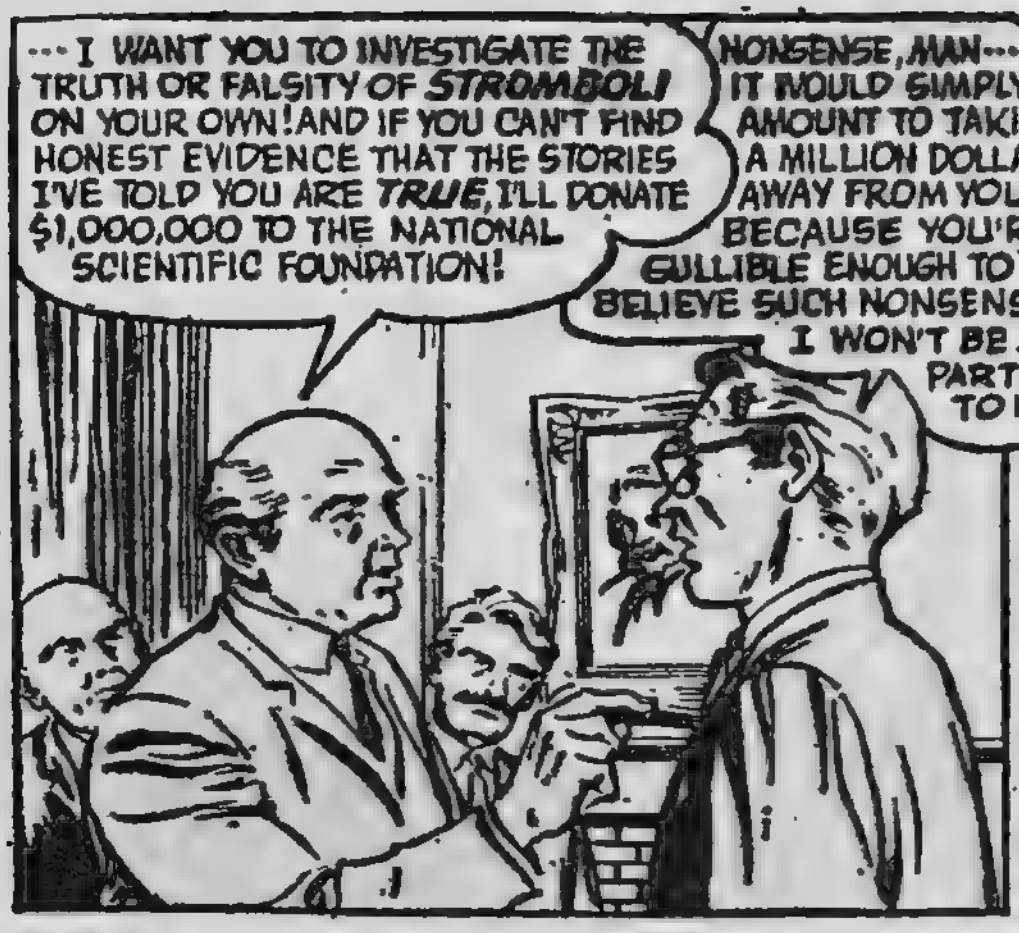
"THE ANIMAL, TOO, HAD STRANGE POWERS! ONCE, WHEN STROMBOLI WAS ATTACKED BY THIEVES, IT GREW SUDDENLY TO MONSTROUS SIZE···AND ROUTED THEM!"
WELL DONE!


"BUT THE WHOLE CITY WAS TERRORIZED BY THE CAT, AND STROMBOLI WAS FINALLY ORDERED TO DESTROY IT···"
IT MUST HAVE HURT YOU, HAVING TO PUT THE CAT TO DEATH!
DEATH? YOU CAN'T KILL A WITCH'S "FAMILIAR"! ALL I'VE DONE IS PUT IT INTO A MAGICAL SUSPENDED ANIMATION···AND WHEN THIS CASKET IS OPENED 4 CENTURIES FROM NOW, IN THE YEAR 1961, IT WILL SPRING TO LIFE ONCE MORE!

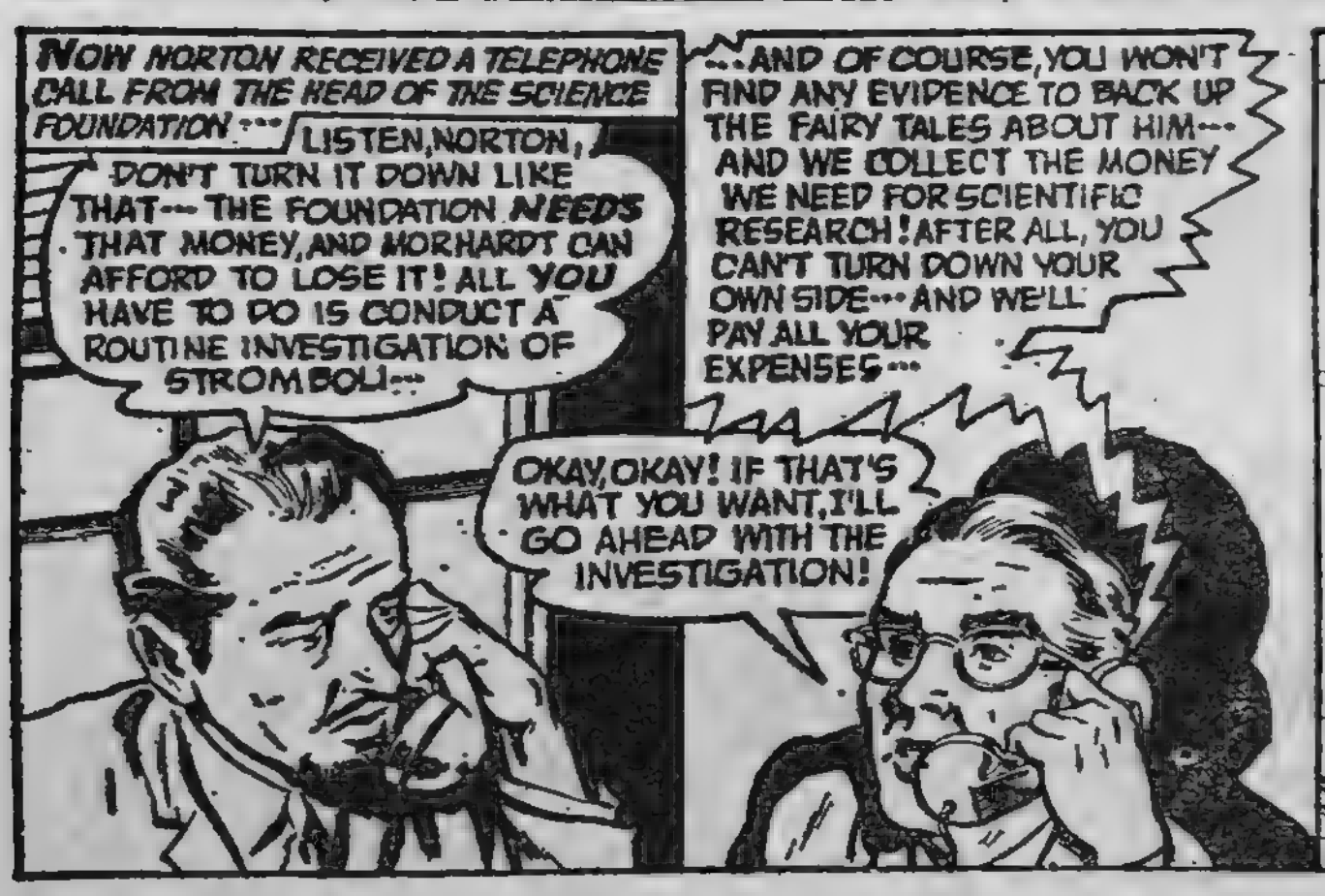

I NEVER HEARD SUCH HOGWASH IN MY LIFE! SO YOU CLAIM THAT THIS STROMBOLI COULD READ THE FUTURE, TOO?.
I DO, SIR! HIS PREDICTIONS CAN BE FOUND IN ANY LIBRARY. HE FORECAST BOTH THE FRENCH AND AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS···.


···OUR CIVIL WAR, THE FIRST WORLD WAR···AND HE GAVE EXACT DATES, TOO! AND ABOUT HIS PREDICTION. ABOUT THE CAT···YOU CAN BE SURE THAT SOMETIME IN THIS YEAR, 1961, SOMEBODY'S GOING TO OPEN THAT CASKET, AND THE CAT WILL BE RELEASED···ALIVE!


SUPERSTITIOUS NONSENSE···OLD WIVES' TALES TO BE BELIEVED ONLY BY FOOLS! THERE'S ONLY ONE TRUTH, AND THAT'S THE TRUTH OF SCIENCE!
I'M WILLING TO BACK UP MY BELIEFS IF YOU'LL BACK UP YOURS! I KNOW YOU AS AN HONEST MAN, AND SO···


...I WANT YOU TO INVESTIGATE THE TRUTH OR FALSITY OF STROMBOLI ON YOUR OWN! AND IF YOU CAN'T FIND HONEST EVIDENCE THAT THE STORIES I'VE TOLD YOU ARE TRUE, I'LL DONATE $1,000,000 TO THE NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION!
NONSENSE, MAN... IT WOULD SIMPLY AMOUNT TO TAKING A MILLION DOLLARS AWAY FROM YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE GULLIBLE ENOUGH TO BELIEVE SUCH NONSENSE. I WON'T BE A PARTY TO IT!

BUT THE STORY LEAKED OUT...
DAILY EXPRESS
WEALTHY CLUBMAN BETS MILLION NOTED SCIENTIST CAN'T DISPROVE MAGIC
MONEY TO GO TO NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION


NOW NORTON RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE HEAD OF THE SCIENCE FOUNDATION...
LISTEN, NORTON, DON'T TURN IT DOWN LIKE THAT--- THE FOUNDATION NEEDS THAT MONEY, AND MORHARDT CAN AFFORD TO LOSE IT! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CONDUCT A ROUTINE INVESTIGATION OF STROMBOLI...
...AND OF COURSE, YOU WON'T FIND ANY EVIDENCE TO BACK UP THE FAIRY TALES ABOUT HIM--- AND WE COLLECT THE MONEY WE NEED FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH! AFTER ALL, YOU CAN'T TURN DOWN YOUR OWN SIDE--- AND WE'LL PAY ALL YOUR EXPENSES...
OKAY, OKAY! IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, I'LL GO AHEAD WITH THE INVESTIGATION!

AND SO...
THE ONLY WAY I CAN CONDUCT A FAIR SEARCH IS ON STROMBOLI'S HOME GROUNDS IN ITALY! BUT HOW DO I GO 400 YEARS BACK?

LAZURRI, ITALY--- THE OLD PLACE THAT HAD BEEN STROMBOLI'S HOME WAS NOW A SMALL INN. THAT WAS FORTUNATE---
I'D LIKE TO HAVE THE VERY ROOM IN WHICH STROMBOLI SLEPT, IF IT'S AVAILABLE!
WHY NOT, SIGNOR? YOU ARE OUR ONLY GUEST!

HERE IT IS. BUT I WISH TO WARN YOU, THERE ARE RUMORS THAT THE ROOM IS—WELL— HAUNTED!
THANKS. I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES!

HMM---IT CERTAINLY LOOKS OLD ENOUGH ---BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET THAT DISTURB MY DREAMS!

BUT HIS DREAMS WEREN'T PEACEFUL-THEY WERE FILLED WITH---STROMBOLI!
HA-HA! HA-HA-HA! HA-HA!

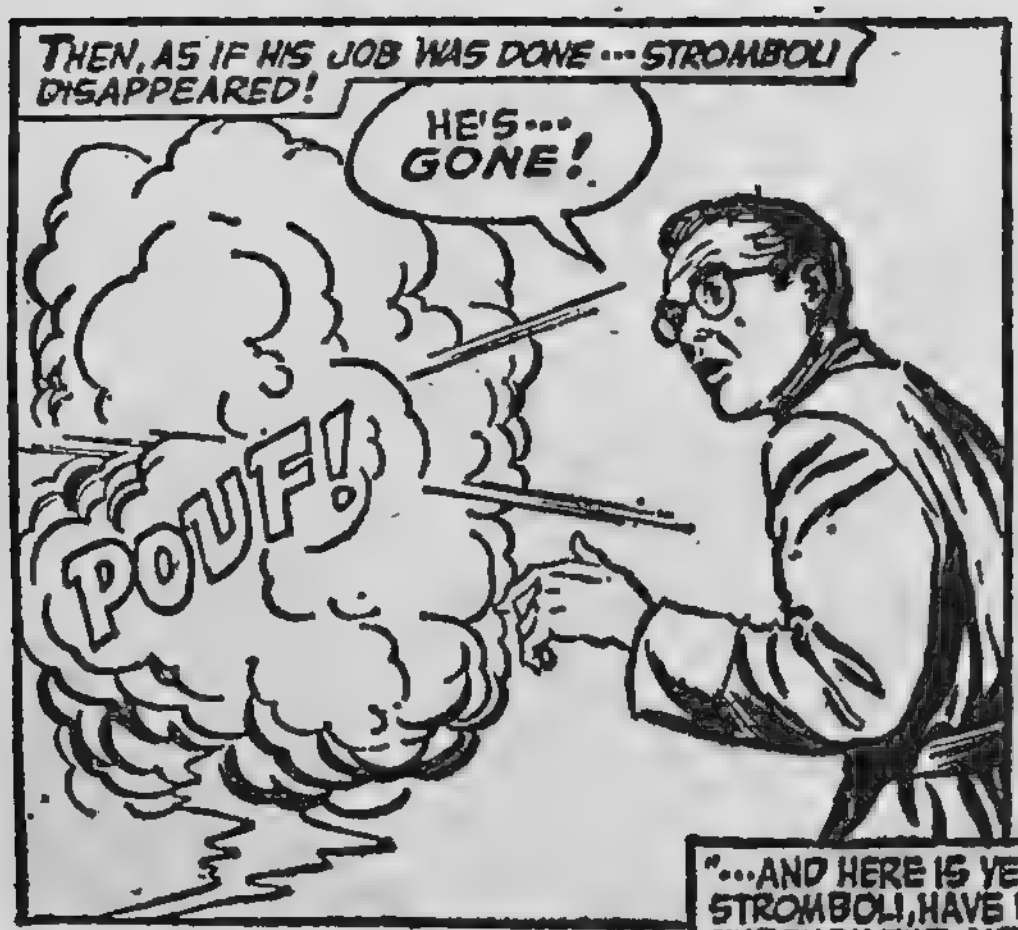
SOMETHING SEEMED TO BE SHAKING HIM---WHY---SOMETHING WAS SHAKING HIM! HE OPENED HIS EYES TO SEE---
GREAT HEAVENS, IT'S--- STROMBOLI!

NO---NO---I CAN'T BE AWAKE---THIS CAN'T BE TRUE---
AH, BUT IT IS, MORTAL!

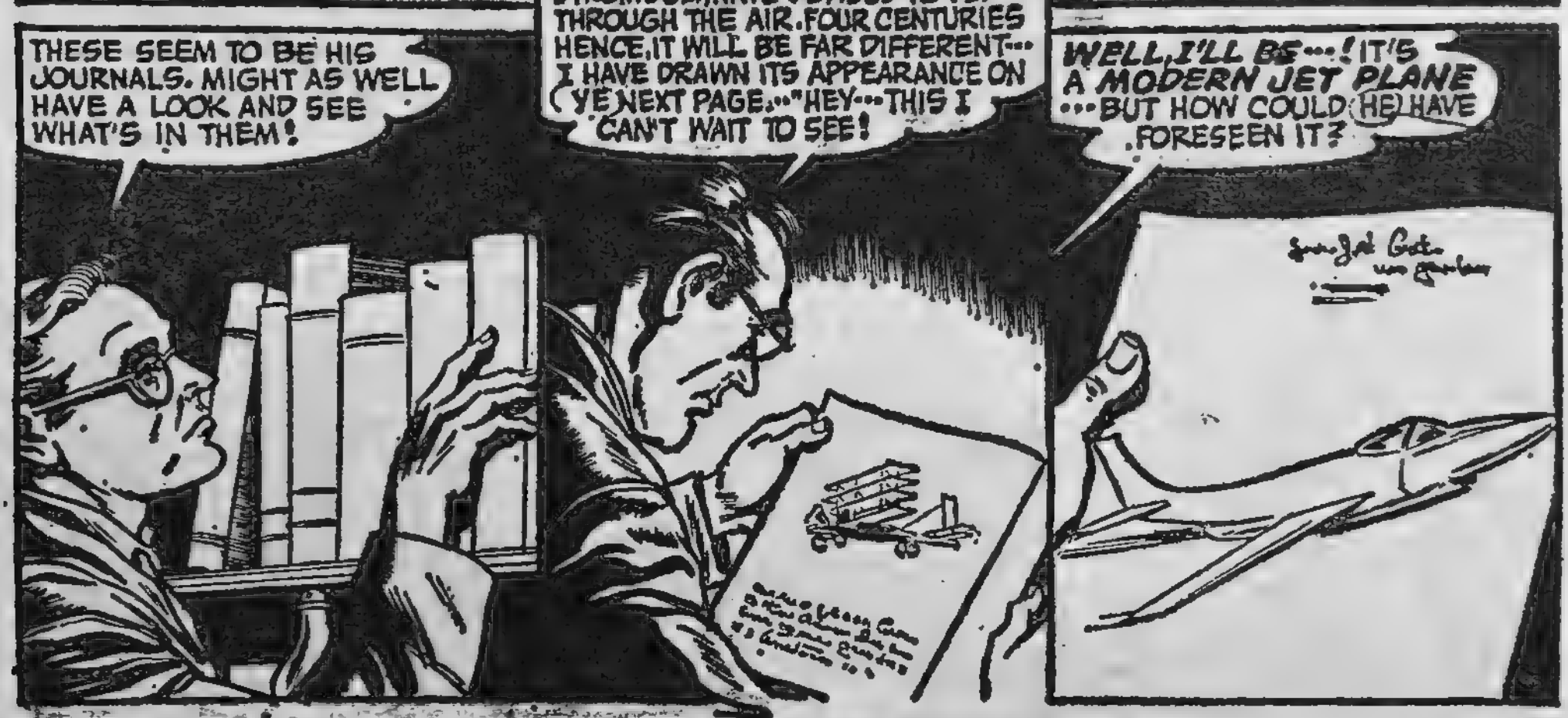
YOU---YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO HARM ME, WHATEVER YOU ARE---YOU SEEM TO WANT ME TO COME WITH YOU! GO AHEAD ---I---I'M GAME---

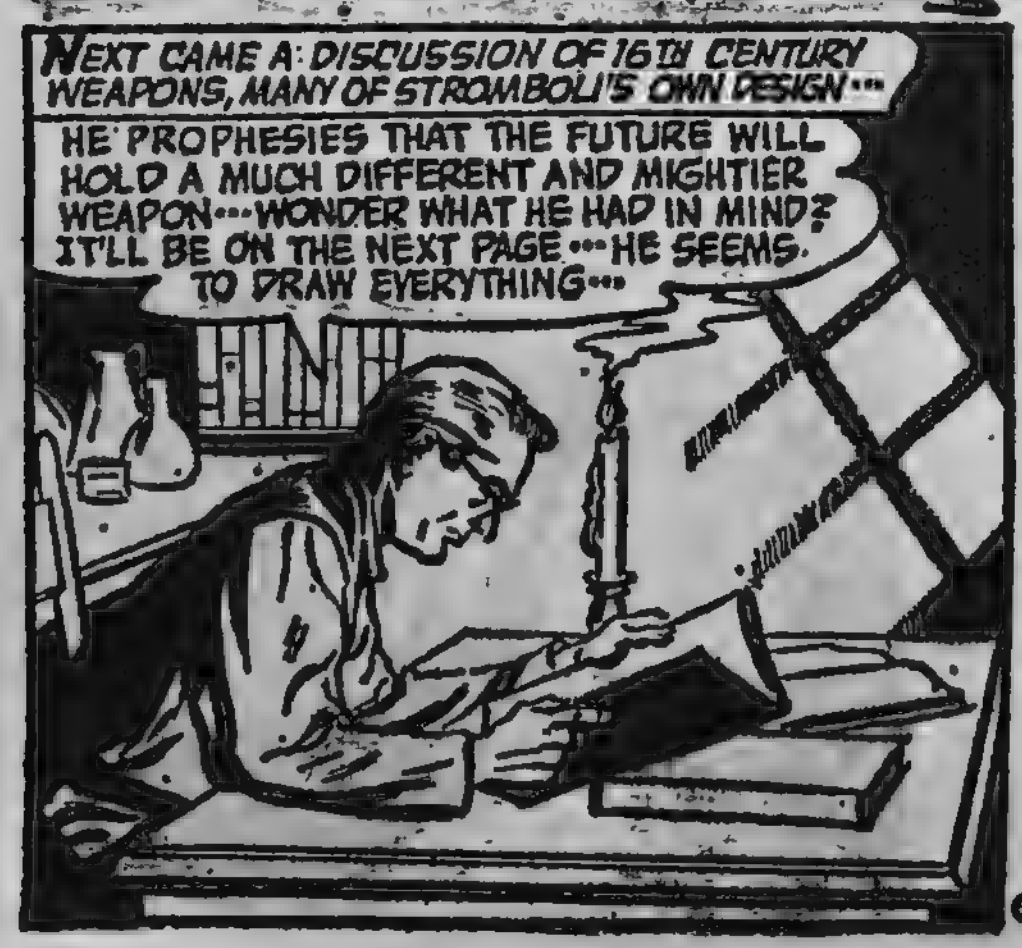
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO---PUSH IT? OKAY!

A SECRET PANEL--- THERE'S A HIDDEN CHAMBER BEYOND THE WALL!
CR-REAK!


THEN, AS IF HIS JOB WAS DONE ... STROMBOLI DISAPPEARED!
HE'S... GONE!
POUF!

INSIDE, THE SECRET LABORATORY OF A MEDIEVAL ALCHEMIST...
SO THIS IS WHERE HE WORKED... FOUR CENTURIES AGO!


THESE SEEM TO BE HIS JOURNALS. MIGHT AS WELL HAVE A LOOK AND SEE WHAT'S IN THEM!
"...AND HERE IS YE SKY CRAFT THAT I, STROMBOLI, HAVE DEVISED TO FLY THROUGH THE AIR. FOUR CENTURIES HENCE, IT WILL BE FAR DIFFERENT... I HAVE DRAWN ITS APPEARANCE ON YE NEXT PAGE..." HEY... THIS I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE!
WELL, I'LL BE...! IT'S A MODERN JET PLANE ...BUT HOW COULD HE HAVE FORESEEN IT?


NEXT CAME A DISCUSSION OF 16TH CENTURY WEAPONS, MANY OF STROMBOLI'S OWN DESIGN...
HE PROPHESIES THAT THE FUTURE WILL HOLD A MUCH DIFFERENT AND MIGHTIER WEAPON... WONDER WHAT HE HAD IN MIND? IT'LL BE ON THE NEXT PAGE... HE SEEMS TO DRAW EVERYTHING...

I... I DON'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S AN ATOMIC EXPLOSION... HE FORESAW THAT, TOO!

NOW HE READ PROPHECIES OF A TERRIBLE WAR TO BE TOUCHED OFF IN 1939 BY A MADMAN CONQUEROR AND MURDERER WHO WOULD HIMSELF DIE AS A RESULT OF IT. AND THE PICTURE THAT STROMBOLI HAD DRAWN WAS THAT OF---

---ADOLF HITLER! BUT ---BUT HOW---?

HMMM---HE SEEMS TO BE GETTING HOT UNDER THE COLLAR ABOUT SOMETHING HERE---"IN EVERY CENTURY, MEN SHALL DOUBT MY STRANGE POWERS, STRIVE TO JEER AT THEM. HERE IS YE FACE OF A FAMOUS DOUBTER OF YE 20TH CENTURY---"

HE'S SKETCHED---MY FACE! ALL OF THE THINGS THAT MORHARDT SAID ABOUT HIM---HIS AMAZING POWERS---OH, NO, THIS IS ALL RIDICULOUS! I'M STILL ASLEEP AND DREAMING ALL THIS---IT'S IMPOSSIBLE---

DAZEDLY HE STOOD, WALKED TO A NEARBY CHEST---

I---I CAN'T READ ANYMORE ---CAN'T TAKE IT!---WONDER WHAT THIS IS? THERE MAY BE SOMETHING INSIDE---

--- NOTHING---

NOTHING? NEXT MOMENT---

WHY, IT'S A CAT---ALIVE!---SAY---MORHARDT TOLD ME ABOUT THE WITCH'S "FAMILIAR" BEING PLACED IN A MAGICAL SUSPENDED ANIMATION ---THAT THE CASKET WOULD BE OPENED IN 4 CENTURIES---

YES---IN THE YEAR 1961, WHEN IT WOULD SPRING TO LIFE ONCE MORE! THIS WAS 1961---THE CASKET HAD BEEN OPENED---AND THE ANIMAL, GROWN TO HUGE PROPORTIONS, SPRANG!

OH, NO, NO--- H-HELP!

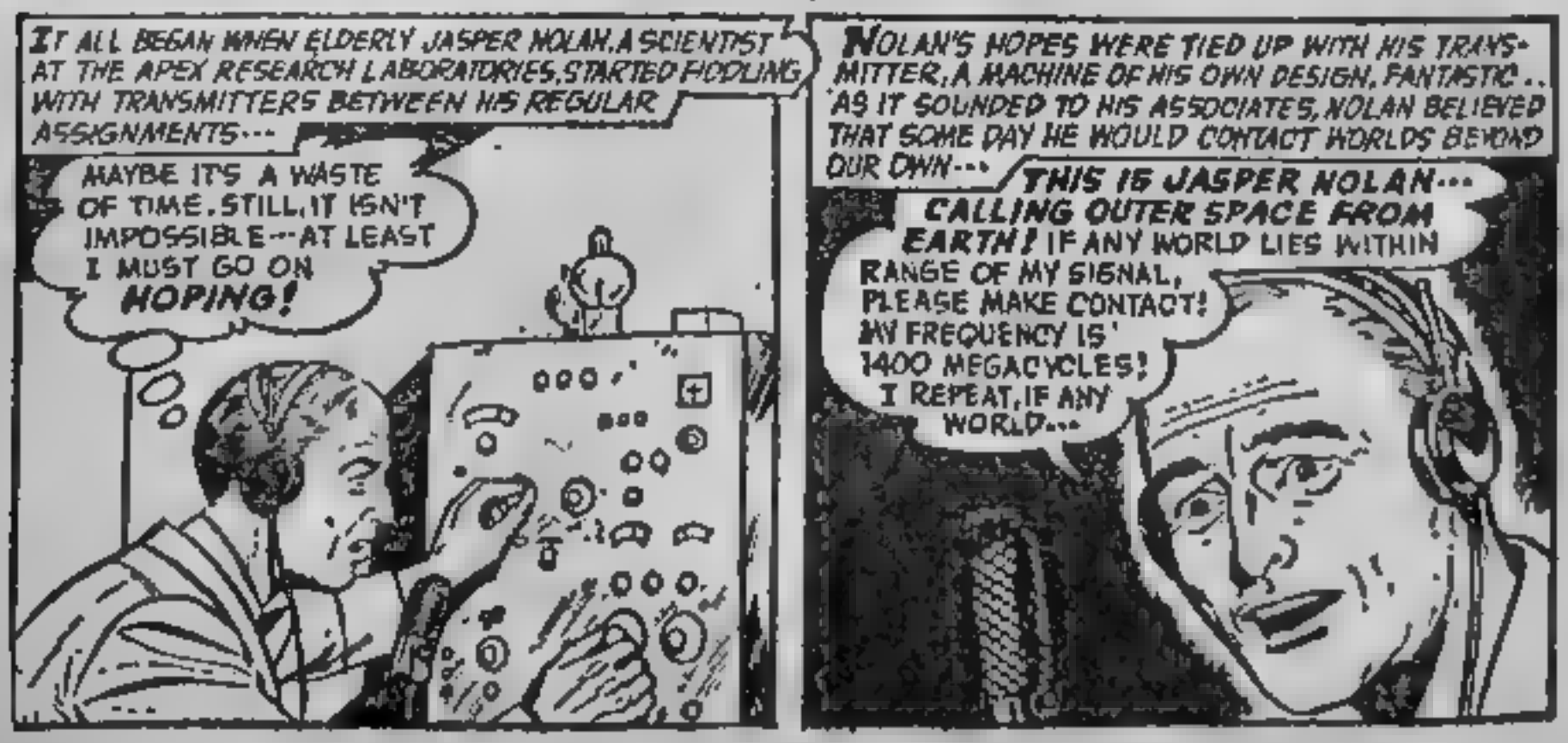
ARR-RRRRR

HE FELT ITS CLAWS, RENDING LIKE FIRE··· AND THEN HE KNEW NO MORE! NEXT THING HE KNEW, HE OPENED HIS EYES···
I'M···IN A HOSPITAL···
YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, DR. NORTON!
THE HOTEL HAD BURNED TO THE GROUND, THEY TOLD HIM ···IT WAS ONLY SHEER LUCK THAT HE HAD BEEN RESCUED···
OH···THEN I MUST HAVE BEEN BURNED! THAT ACCOUNTS FOR THOSE···NIGHTMARES I HAD···
WHAT SORT OF NIGHTMARES?
ALL ABOUT···A HUGE BLACK CAT···ATTACKING ME, SCRATCHING ME WITH CLAWS THAT FELT LIKE FIRE!
OH, NO!

THAT'S FUNNY, DR. NORTON. VERY FUNNY ···BECAUSE, YOU SEE, YOU DIDN'T SUFFER FROM BURNS AT ALL! YOU WERE BROUGHT INTO THE HOSPITAL WITH CONTUSIONS··· SCRATCHES RESEMBLING THOSE MADE BY THE TALONS OF SOME JUNGLE BEAST!
NORTON RETURNED IN TIME TO ADDRESS THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION. THEY WERE ALL INTERESTED IN HEARING HIS FINDINGS IN THE STROMBOLI MATTER···
BEFORE I MAKE MY REPORT, LET ME STATE THAT MR. MORHARDT WISHES TO ANNOUNCE HIS DONATION OF A MILLION DOLLARS TO THIS FOUNDATION!
HURRAH!
YAY!
THREE CHEERS!
QUIET, PLEASE!···YOU SEE, MR. MORHARDT IS A SPORT! HE'S GIVING THAT MONEY BECAUSE HE FEELS THAT SCIENCE IS A GREAT THING, AND DESERVING OF SUCH SUPPORT···BUT HE DIDN'T HAVE TO!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, DIDN'T HAVE TO?
SIMPLY THAT I'VE MADE MY INVESTIGATION AND HAVE DISCOVERED THAT THERE'S MORE IN THIS LIFE OF OURS THAN WE CAN DREAM OF···MORE THAN SCIENCE ALONE! YOU SEE, GENTLEMEN, THERE'S THE UNKNOWN···AND A GREAT AND REAL MAGICIAN WHOSE NAME WAS STROMBOLI!
The END!

OUTER SPACE CALLING!

STORY
BILLY ROSE
ART
OSCEN WHITNEY



ON AND ON OVER AND OVER, JASPER NOLAN REPEATED HIS MESSAGE, HIS POWERFUL TRANSMITTER BEAMED INTO THE HEAVENS ABOVE! OVER AND OVER AND OVER- -

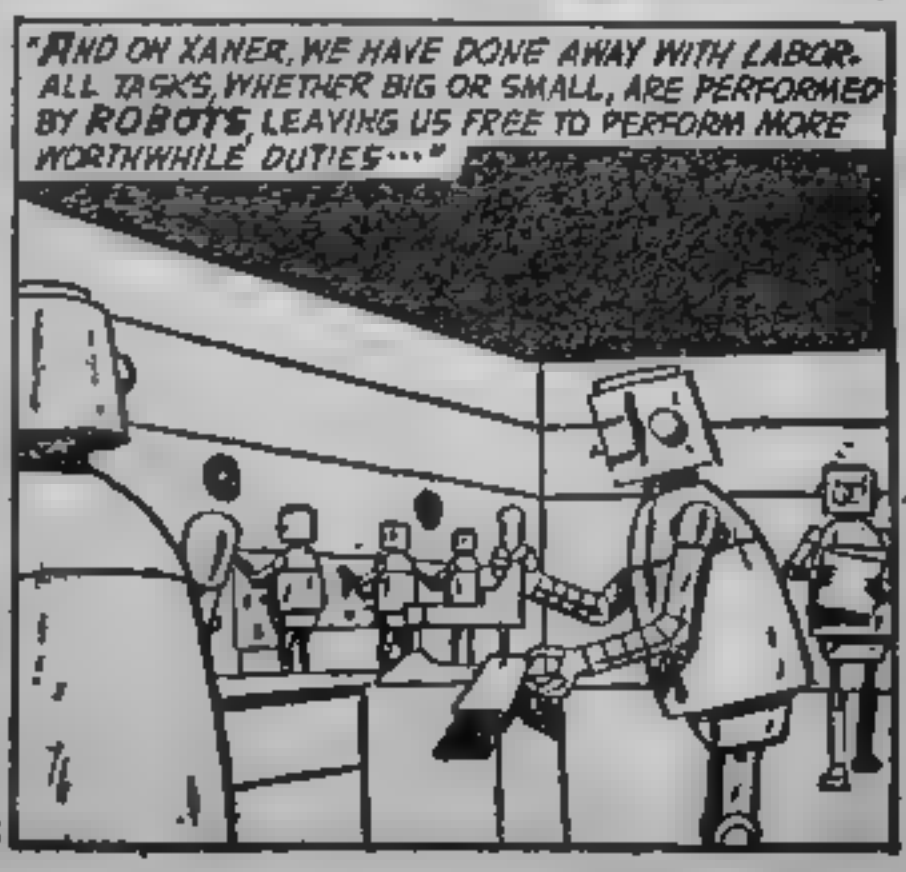
BUT AS USUAL---
NOTHING---JUST DEAD SILENCE! PERHAPS I AM WASTING MY TIME ---MAKING A FOOL OF MYSELF---

PERHAPS I OUGHT TO -- WHAT'S THAT? SOMETHING'S COMING THROUGH!
STAND BY, JASPER NOLAN! SIGNAL RECEIVED-- IDENTIFICATION TO FOLLOW---

THEN IT CAME, THE THING NOLAN HAD DREAMED OF
THIS IS THE PLANET XANER CALLING! OUR POSITION IS MINUS TWENTY-TWO IN THE FOURTH ASTROSPHERE! YOUR CONTACT IS NARO VAG!
I HEAR YOU, NARO! CONTINUE WITH MESSAGE--- PLEASE RELATE IN DETAIL!

THE VOICE CONTINUED TO COME THROUGH CLEARLY, GIVING AN ACCURATE WORD PICTURE FROM THE DISTANT PLANET---
WE WHO LIVE ON XANER ARE UPRIGHT CREATURES, DISTINGUISHED BY OUR INTELLECT. IT IS ALTOGETHER POSSIBLE THAT YOUR FELLOW CREATURES ARE MUCH LIKE US!

"OUR CITIES ARE MODELS OF PLANNED LIVING AND WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS---"


"AND ON XANER, WE HAVE DONE AWAY WITH LABOR. ALL TASKS, WHETHER BIG OR SMALL, ARE PERFORMED BY ROBOTS, LEAVING US FREE TO PERFORM MORE WORTHWHILE DUTIES---"

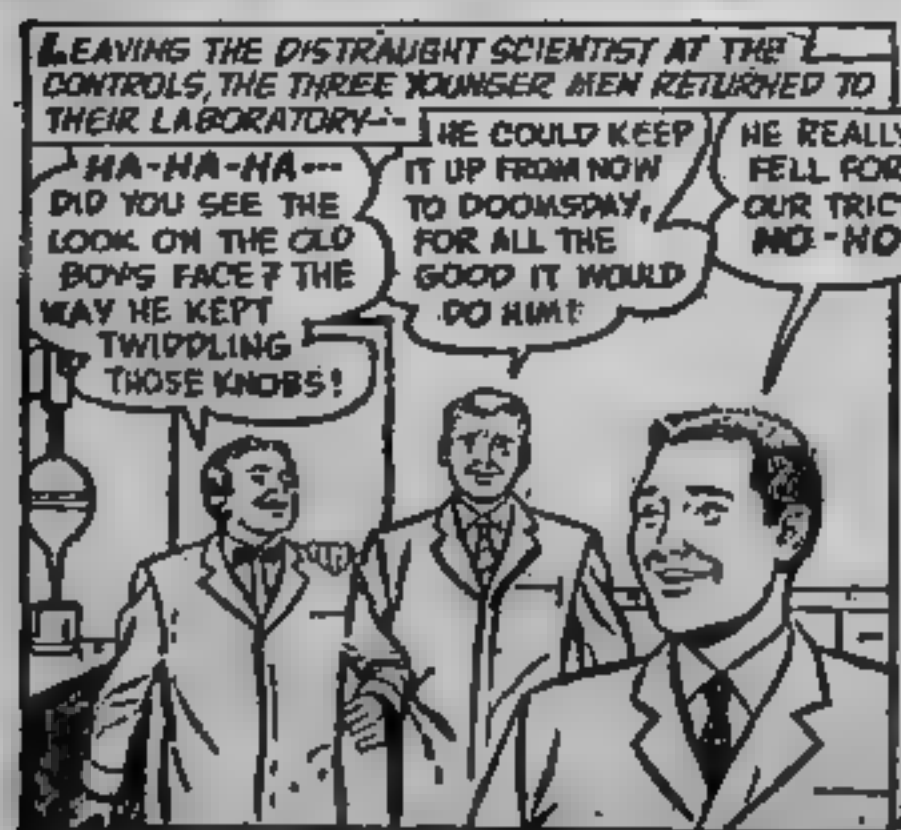
I MUST SIGN OFF NOW, EARTHLING, BUT WE WILL CONTACT EACH OTHER AGAIN. THIS IS INDEED A GREAT MOMENT---THE BARRIER OF SPACE HAS BEEN SMASHED!

AS THE CONTACT ENDED---
IT HAPPENED---I SPOKE TO A WORLD IN OUTER SPACE! I---I'VE GOT TO TELL THE OTHERS!

I CONTACTED OUTER SPACE! I TELL YOU, IT HAPPENED!
SURE, SURE, OLD MAN, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO CALM DOWN! MUSTN'T UPSET YOURSELF TOO MUCH!

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME---YOU THINK I'VE MADE IT ALL UP! PERHAPS YOU EVEN THINK I'M A BIT MAD! BUT I DID TALK TO ANOTHER WORLD, AND IF YOU STEP INTO MY LAB, I'LL PROVE IT!
ALL RIGHT, NOLAN, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL---

BACK IN HIS LAB, NOLAN WORKED DESPERATELY AT HIS TRANSMITTER---
BUT I DID CONTACT THEM, ONLY NOW I CAN'T SEEM TO GET THROUGH! BUT I DID TALK TO XANER---
OF COURSE ---IF YOU SAY SO---


LEAVING THE DISTRAUGHT SCIENTIST AT THE CONTROLS, THE THREE YOUNGER MEN RETURNED TO THEIR LABORATORY---
HA-HA-HA--- DID YOU SEE THE LOOK ON THE OLD BOY'S FACE? THE WAY HE KEPT TWIDDLING THOSE KNOBS!
HE COULD KEEP IT UP FROM NOW TO DOOMSDAY, FOR ALL THE GOOD IT WOULD DO HIM!
HE REALLY FELL FOR OUR TRICK! NO-NO!

AND ALL HE WAS GETTING WAS THE MESSAGE WE SENT HIM ON OUR LITTLE TRANSMITTER! WHAT A LAUGH!
THE LOOK IN HIS EYES WHEN HE SAID HE HAD CONTACTED OUTER SPACE! I WAS READY TO SPLIT MY SEAMS!

IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, JASPER NOLAN REMAINED GLUED TO HIS SET···INTENT, EAGER, UNAWARE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON
I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING SINCE THAT FIRST TIME, BUT MAYBE TODAY···

WHILE IN THE ADJOINING LAB, THE GAG WENT ON—
THIS IS OUTER SPACE CALLING EARTH! DO YOU READ ME, JASPER NOLAN? DO YOU READ ME?

BUT A WEEK LATER, IN THE COMPANY CAFETERIA···
LOOK FELLAS, HERE COMES OLD NOLAN AND HE LOOKS ALL WOUND UP!
MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE LAID OFF THE GAG! HE'S TAKEN THE WHOLE THING TOO SERIOUSLY!

IT HAPPENED AGAIN, DESPITE YOUR DISBELIEF! YOU THINK I'M MAD, BUT I DID CONTACT OUTER SPACE TODAY AND THEY'VE ACCEPTED ME! THEY'RE COMING FOR ME, AND I'VE AGREED TO JOIN THEM···THE VERY-FIRST EARTHLING TO GO TO A WORLD BEYOND OUR OWN!
NOW, REALLY, OLD MAN— YOU'VE GOT TO—

I'VE NOTHING MORE TO SAY! BELIEVE WHAT YOU WISH! IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE NOW!
BUT NOLAN! THERE'S SOMETHING YOU OUGHT TO KNOW···

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, COLLINS! THE WHOLE GAG WAS YOUR IDEA TO BEGIN WITH, BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO OVERDO IT! WHY DID YOU HAVE TO SEND HIM A MESSAGE SAYING THEY'D CALL FOR HIM?
I SENT NO SUCH MESSAGE, AND FURTHERMORE I CAN PROVE IT! COME SEE FOR YOURSELF!

COLLINS TOOK HIS TWO ASSOCIATES BACK TO THEIR LAB···

I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO BREAK THIS TO YOU, BUT THIS MORNING I TOOK THE WHOLE SET APART, AND FOUND AN INCOMPLETE CIRCUIT! IT HASN'T BEEN OPERATING FROM THE VERY FIRST···IT COULDN'T HAVE! NOLAN NEVER RECEIVED ANY MESSAGE FROM US!

BUT NOLAN SAID HE RECEIVED A MESSAGE THIS MORNING! IT MEANS ONLY ONE THING, THE OLD BOY HAS FLIPPED!

I'M SORT OF ASHAMED—NOW THAT I KNOW WE'VE BEEN DEALING WITH A LUNATIC!

MAYBE IF WE WENT TO HIM··· ADVISED HIM TO TAKE A REST···

BUT WHEN THEY ENTERED JASPER NOLAN'S LAB···

HE ISN'T HERE!

THERE'S A LIT CIGARETTE IN THE TRAY! HE PROBABLY STEPPED OUT FOR A MINUTE—LET'S WAIT!

AS THE MINUTES TICKED BY···

I—I HAVE THE STRANGEST SORT OF FEELING! I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT, BUT···

LISTEN! THERE'S SOME SOUND COMING OVER THE HEAD-SET! HEAR IT?

TURN UP THE VOLUME!

AND A MOMENT LATER, TO THEIR COMBINED SHOCK···

THIS IS JASPER NOLAN CALLING, SPEAKING FROM OUTER SPACE! IF ANYONE IS WITHIN RANGE OF MY VOICE, WILL HE KINDLY RELATE THIS MESSAGE TO MY ASSOCIATES? THEY HAVE CALLED FOR ME, AND I AM JOINING THEM IN THEIR WORLD! YOU HAVE LAUGHED, SCOFFED, THOUGHT ME MAD! BUT THEY HAVE CALLED FOR ME··· THEY HAVE···

IT CAN'T BE, NOLAN! IT CAN'T!

SO YOU STILL DON'T BELIEVE ME! ONLY IT MAKES LITTLE DIFFERENCE NOW···SO VERY LITTLE DIFFERENCE···

SHOCKED, STUNNED, THEY LOOKED ON AS THE MESSAGE GREW FAINTER AND FAINTER···

AND ALL ALONG WE THOUGHT···

IT'S BEYOND BELIEF, BEYOND EXPLANATION—

BUT IT'S TRUE! I AM THE VERY FIRST TO GO! FARE-WELL, FARE-WELL···

THE END!

SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING, IT HAPPENED---A SERIES OF INEXPLICABLE EVENTS THAT CHANGED A CHARMING NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITY INTO A NIGHTMARISH---

DOOMED VILLAGE!

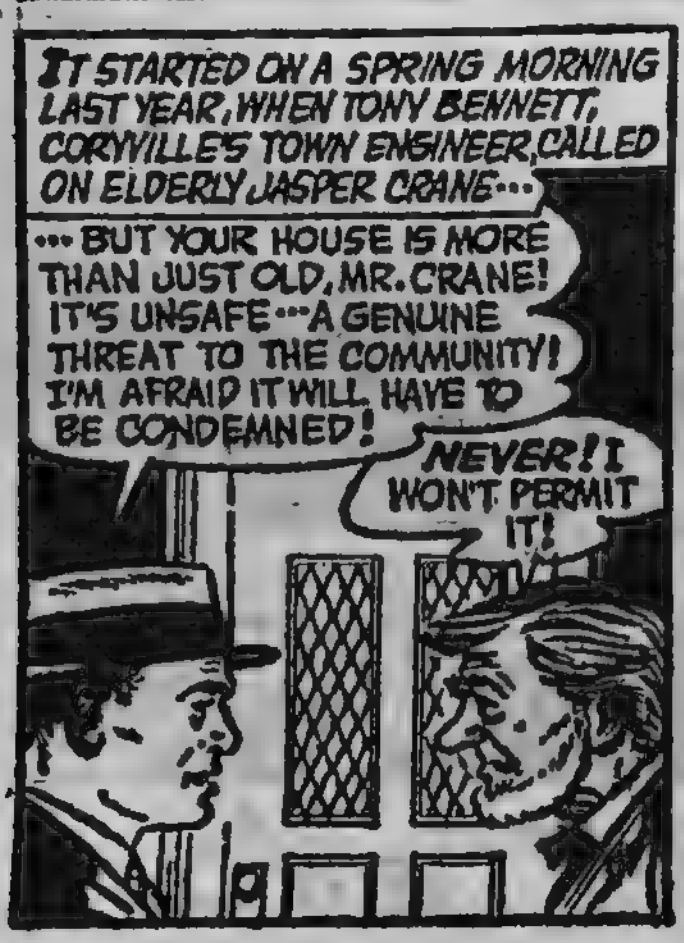
STORY: LAFCADIO LEE
ART: TOM HICKEY

MOMMY, LOOK! THE STATUE!

GOOD HEAVENS! IT'S RISING INTO THE AIR!

STORY by LAFCADIO LEE

ART by TOM HICKEY



WHEN TONY REPORTED TO MAYOR GREEN---
HE'LL GET OVER IT! THAT HOUSE IS GOING TO COME DOWN, THREAT OR NO THREAT! THE OLD DUFFER PUT ON A BIG ACT TO GET A BIGGER PRICE FOR THE OLD PLACE!
I DON'T KNOW, MAYOR! IT DIDN'T LOOK LIKE AN ACT TO ME!

SOME TIME LATER---
I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT! THIS CRATE WAS LEFT OUTSIDE THE DOOR---MARKED ANONYMOUS GIFT TO THE VILLAGE!

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW!
IT'S A SMALL-SCALE REPLICA OF CORYVILLE, COMPLETE TO THE SMALLEST DETAIL! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING MORE PERFECT!

STRANGE, SIR---SOMEONE SENDING SUCH A GIFT, AND NO MENTION OF THEIR NAME!
SOME PEOPLE ARE MODEST! JUST LOOK AT IT, MY BOY, THERE ISN'T A THING LEFT OUT---

AND LOOK! THERE'S THE NEW LIBRARY---
WATCH IT, SIR! YOUR CUFF HIT THE CLOCK TOWER!

WHAT WAS THAT?
CRASH!
IT CAME FROM OUTSIDE! COME ON!

OH, NO! IT'S THE OLD CLOCK TOWER---IT FELL TO THE GROUND!
YES---JUST LIKE THE ONE IN THE MODEL VILLAGE!

I'M GLAD NO ONE WAS HURT! BUT IT WAS STRANGE···
YES. WHEN YOU CONSIDER THAT THE CLOCK TOWER FELL AFTER YOUR CUFF KNOCKED OVER ITS COUNTERPART IN THE MODEL VILLAGE!

THERE CAN'T BE ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TWO EVENTS··· IT WAS PURE COINCIDENCE! THAT CLOCK TOWER HAS BEEN SHAKY FOR QUITE A WHILE!
JUST AS YOU SAY!

THAT EVENING···WITH GRACE EVANS, THE MAYOR'S SECRETARY···
I KNOW WHAT'S WORRYING YOU, TONY···I WAS AT THE DOOR WHEN THE MAYOR KNOCKED OVER THE CLOCK TOWER IN THE MODEL VILLAGE! BUT THEN THINGS LIKE THAT CAN'T REALLY HAPPEN···
THAT'S WHAT I KEEP TELLING MYSELF, GRACE, BUT···

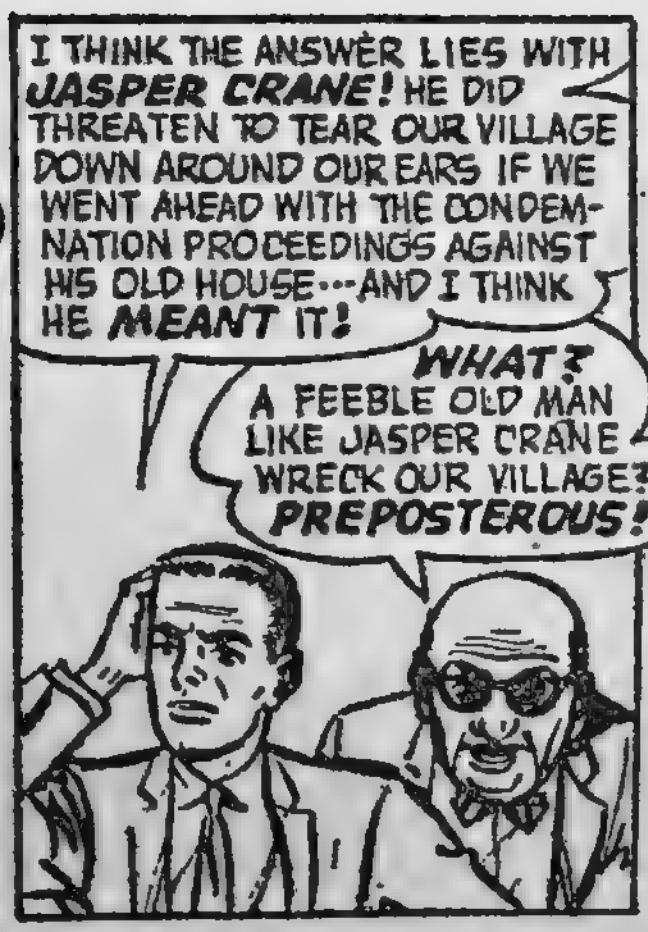
BUT WHAT?
I'M NOT SURE···IT'S FAR FETCHED, BUT I'M GOING TO INVESTIGATE!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, IN CORYVILLE'S MEMORIAL PARK···
MOMMY, LOOK!
GOOD HEAVENS! THE STATUE!
AM I DREAMING?

AND A SECOND LATER, IN ANOTHER PART OF TOWN···
APPLIANCE SHOP
OFFICE
GEORGE! LOOK OUT!
GOOD GRIEF, A FLYING STATUE!

IN MAYOR GREEN'S OFFICE···
IT'S TOO UNBELIEVABLE! SURE I MOVED THE PARK STATUE IN THE MODEL VILLAGE, JUST TO SEE WHAT IT WOULD LOOK LIKE ON THE WEST SIDE OF TOWN···BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD AFFECT THE REAL STATUE! EVEN AFTER WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY WITH THE CLOCK TOWER!
WE HAVE A GRAVE PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS, MAYOR!

THIS CONFOUNDED MODEL--- I WISH I HAD NEVER SEEN IT! I WISH WE COULD DESTROY IT SOME WAY!
I WOULDN'T CHANCE DOING A THING TO IT, NOT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CLOCK TOWER AND THE STATUE! WE'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT IN SOME OTHER WAY---


I THINK THE ANSWER LIES WITH JASPER CRANE! HE DID THREATEN TO TEAR OUR VILLAGE DOWN AROUND OUR EARS IF WE WENT AHEAD WITH THE CONDEMNATION PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HIS OLD HOUSE---AND I THINK HE MEANT IT!
WHAT? A FEEBLE OLD MAN LIKE JASPER CRANE WRECK OUR VILLAGE? PREPOSTEROUS!

HE'S OLD, BUT PERHAPS NOT AS FEEBLE AS YOU THINK! I'VE DONE SOME CHECKING ON CRANE'S BACKGROUND! IT TURNS OUT HE IS A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF OLD HIRAM CRANE WHO WAS TRIED FOR PRACTICING SORCERY IN SALEM BACK IN 1692!

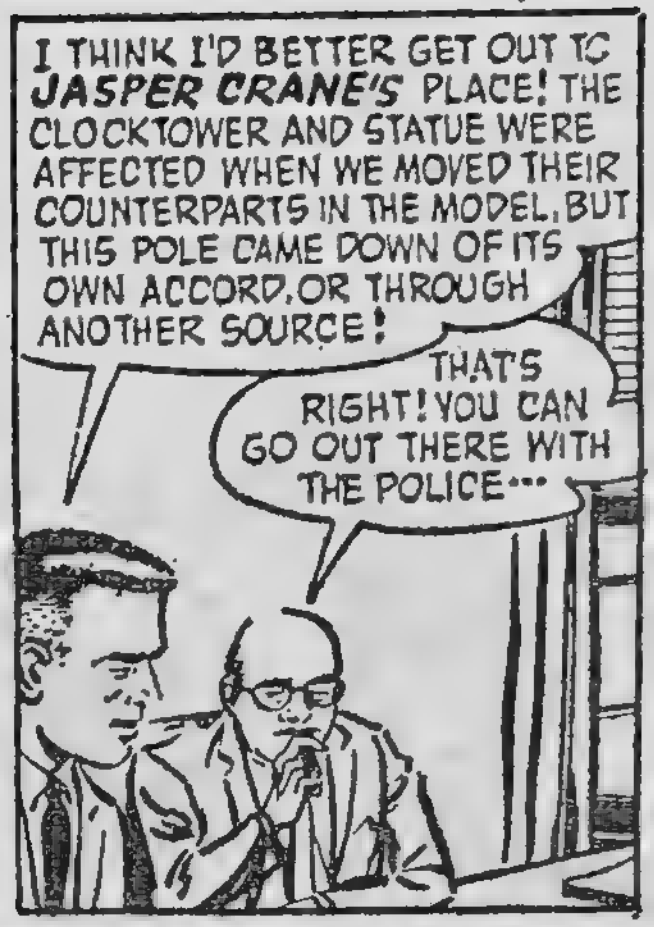
"THE MOB ATTACKED HIS GLOOMY HOUSE ONE WINTER NIGHT, AND THERE WERE EYE-WITNESS REPORTS OF THE STRANGEST SORT OF SIGHTS---"
LOOK AT THE SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY!
IT'S THE SHAPE OF A DEMON!
CRANE IS A SORCERER--- A MALE WITCH!

SORCERY, WITCHCRAFT, NOTHING BUT SUPERSTITIOUS RUBBISH! YOU REALLY EXPECT US TO SWALLOW YOUR EXPLANATION?
I OFFERED IT ONLY AS A POSSIBLE CLUE, SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!

A MOMENT LATER, THE PHONE RANG---
JUST THE VILLAGE MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT! A TELEPHONE POLE CAME DOWN ON THE CORNER OF MAPLE AND ELM!

SAY, LOOK HERE AT THE MODEL VILLAGE!
IT'S A DOWNED TELEPHONE POLE! AT THE CORNER OF MAPLE AND ELM!

IT STILL DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T HAPPEN!
I'M NOT SO SURE ANYMORE!


I THINK I'D BETTER GET OUT TO JASPER CRANE'S PLACE! THE CLOCKTOWER AND STATUE WERE AFFECTED WHEN WE MOVED THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE MODEL, BUT THIS POLE CAME DOWN OF ITS OWN ACCORD, OR THROUGH ANOTHER SOURCE!
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU CAN GO OUT THERE WITH THE POLICE...

MAYBE WE'D BETTER LEAVE THE POLICE OUT AT THE MOMENT... WHY STIR OLD CRANE UP? I'D LIKE TO INVESTIGATE ON MY OWN...PRIVATELY!
ALL RIGHT, DO IT YOUR WAY!

LATER THAT NIGHT...
MAYBE I AM CARRYING THIS TOO FAR; BUT I'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT!

A LIGHT COMING FROM BEHIND THAT DOOR! I'LL HAVE TO GO EASY!

CAUTIOUSLY, TONY PEERED WITHIN...HIS EYES WIDENING WITH SHOCK...
SO THEY'LL MEDDLE WITH JASPER CRANE, EH? WELL, I'LL SHOW 'EM! I SAID I'D PULL THEIR PRECIOUS VILLAGE DOWN AROUND THEIR EARS, AND I WILL! NO ONE WILL ESCAPE!
ANOTHER IDENTICAL VILLAGE...HE PROBABLY MANIPULATES IT WITH THOSE STRINGS! I'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING BEFORE...

SUDDENLY...
MEOW! SPPFFTTTTT!
HUH?

SO...YOU AGAIN! BUT YOUR SNOOPING WON'T HELP... THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO AGAINST ME! YOU SEE, I HAVE CERTAIN POWERS...AND CORYVILLE IS DOOMED!
HIS EYES...THE STRANGE GLOW...FEELING... HELPLESS! GOT TO DO...

SUMMONING ALL OF HIS WILL POWER, TONY PRESSED DOWN ON HIS FLASHLIGHT...
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? SWITCHING THAT LIGHT ON AND OFF CAN'T HURT ME!

BUT AT THAT SAME INSTANT, IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE...
LOOK AT THAT LIGHT FLASHING FROM THE WINDOW OF CRANE'S OLD PLACE!
JUST LIKE A TINY FLASH-LIGHT! IT COULD MEAN TROUBLE!

BACKING OFF, THE ENRAGED OLD MAN RAISED A FLICKERING CANDLE ABOVE HIS HEAD...
THERE IS NO ESCAPE! SOON YOUR VILLAGE WILL BE NOTHING BUT A HEAP OF ASHES!

JUST THEN THE CAT, FRIGHTENED BY THE MOVING LIGHTS, LEAPED FOR THE WINDOW...
OH... LOOK OUT...

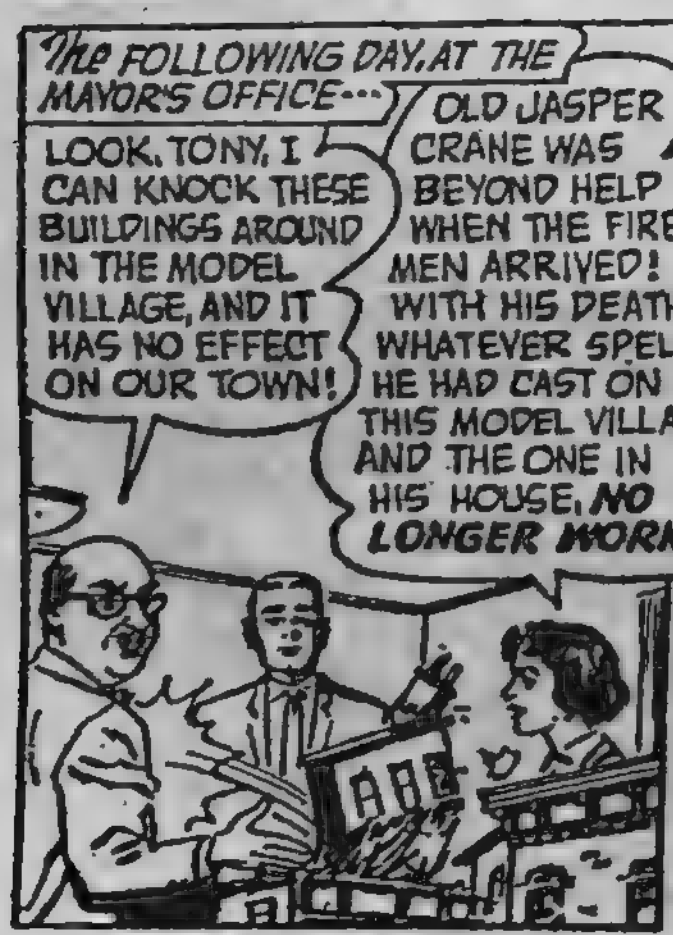
THE CURTAINS! THEY CAUGHT FIRE!

GOT TO KEEP THESE FLAMES--- FROM REACHING THE MODEL VILLAGE! IF NOT :COUGH: OUR TOWN WILL END UP A HEAP OF ASHES--- JUST AS CRANE :COUGH: SAID---

THE SMOKE--- CAN'T KEEP UP MUCH LONGER---

OH-HH!

WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNED---
THE FLAMES--- THEY WERE GETTING SO CLOSE---
IT'S ALL RIGHT, TONY! THE FIRE HAS BEEN PUT OUT--- IT NEVER REACHED THE MODEL VILLAGE! OUR TOWN IS SAFE, THANKS TO YOU!


THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE---
LOOK, TONY, I CAN KNOCK THESE BUILDINGS AROUND IN THE MODEL VILLAGE, AND IT HAS NO EFFECT ON OUR TOWN!
OLD JASPER CRANE WAS BEYOND HELP WHEN THE FIREMEN ARRIVED! WITH HIS DEATH, WHATEVER SPELL HE HAD CAST ON THIS MODEL VILLAGE AND THE ONE IN HIS HOUSE, NO LONGER WORKS!

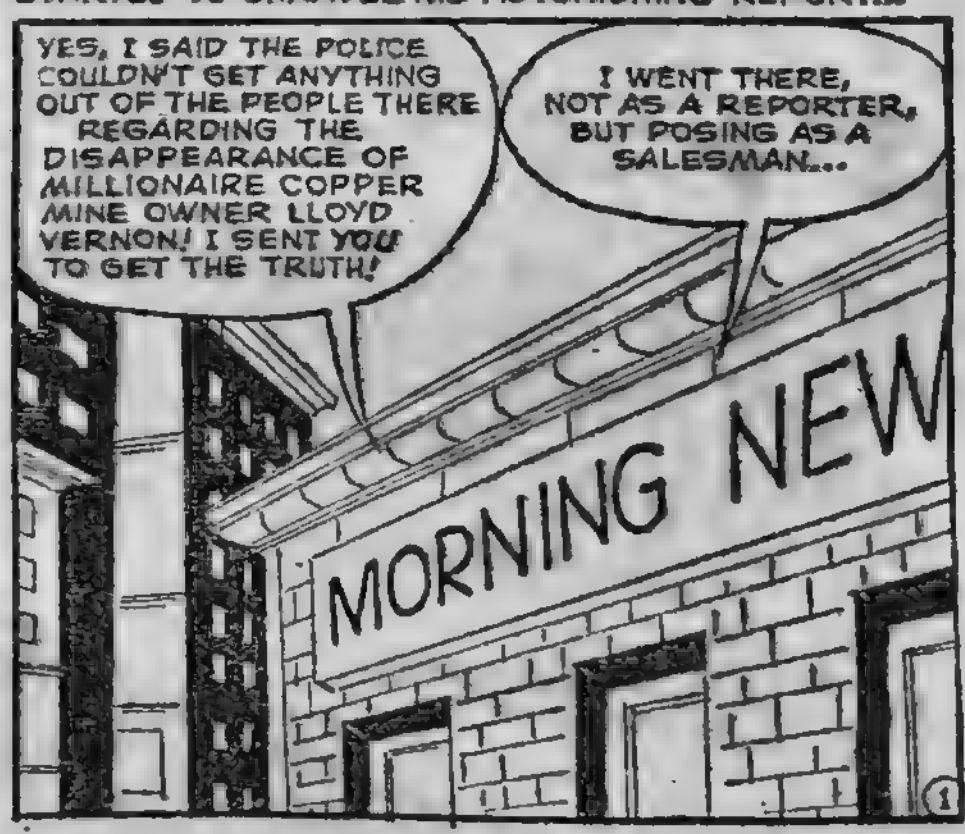
BUT YOUR THEORY WAS RIGHT, TONY! LOOK HERE AT CRANE'S OLD HOUSE!
THE ROOF IS CHARRED, WHERE THE FLAMES FROM THE CANDLE BURNED THROUGH!

WHEN I THINK OUR ENTIRE VILLAGE COULD HAVE GONE UP---
IT KIND OF PROVES THAT WE CAN NEVER TREAT THE UNKNOWN LIGHTLY!
THE END!

WAS IT FOUL PLAY OR WAS SOME DEEPER FORCE AT WORK TO ACCOUNT FOR THE STRANGE HAPPENINGS IN BLACK MOUNTAIN CITY? A PERSEVERING REPORTER ALMOST MISSED THE TRULY FANTASTIC STORY OF AN EERIE PHENOMENON THAT BEGAN...

WHEN VERNON VANISHED

THERE WAS A COLD, HARD GLINT IN THE EYES OF EDITOR MATT HARNEY AS REPORTER ROD MITCHELL STARTED TO UNRAVEL HIS ASTONISHING REPORT...



"IF LLOYD VERNON WAS MISSING, THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF HIS EXISTENCE EVERYWHERE..." ROD MITCHELL SAID! "ALREADY I WAS BEGINNING TO GET A HUNCH..."

"BLACK MOUNTAIN CITY WASN'T A BAD-LOOKING TOWN, BUT THERE WAS A PECULIAR AIR ABOUT THE PLACE, AN AURA OF MYSTERY AND GLOOM..."

"I WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN GETTING A LINE ON VERNON'S HEIRS, BUT THE COUNTERMAN AT THE CAFE I STOPPED AT GAVE ME AN ICY STARE WHEN I MENTIONED THAT NAME..."

"THE VERNON ESTATE WAS BIG ENOUGH TO TEMPT A LOT OF PEOPLE TO TRY SOMETHING UNDERHANDED! AS FOR GRACE VERNON, SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL, AND I KNEW I WAS GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME REMEMBERING SHE WAS MY PRIME SUSPECT..."

"I SUSPECTED GRACE VERNON WAS MORE INTERESTED IN HAVING COMPANY THAN IN DISCUSSING INSULATION FOR THE MANSION, FOR SHE EAGERLY INVITED ME IN..."

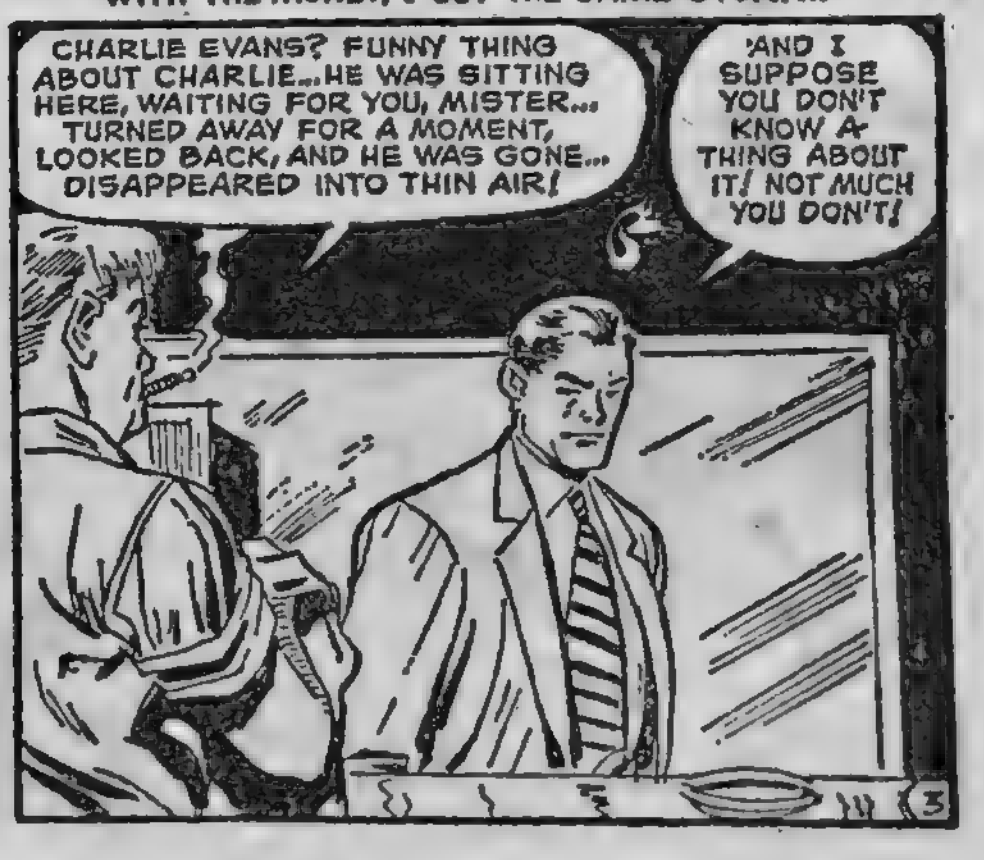
"I SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING THAT GRACE VERNON WAS NOT LONELY WHILE I WAS AROUND! I STARTED SEEING HER EVERY DAY, DATING HER! THAT SHOULD EXPLAIN WHY MY EXPENSE ACCOUNT CAME PRETTY HIGH, MR. HARNEY..."

"THERE WAS A JOB TO BE DONE, BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP ME FROM FEELING LIKE A HEEL WHEN I TOOK GRACE BY THE HAND AND LED HER OUT TO THE GARDEN PATIO..."

"YES, I PRETENDED TO BE IN LOVE WITH GRACE, BUT NO AMOUNT OF COAXING COULD GET HER TO TELL ME WHAT WAS BEHIND THIS MYSTERY! I HAD NO MORE SUCCESS WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN TOWN WHOM I TRIED TO QUESTION..."

"I FOUND A MAN WHO SEEMED TO BE ON THE VERGE OF TELLING ME SOMETHING, BUT WHEN I WENT TO HIS HOUSE THAT NIGHT..."

"THERE WERE OTHERS WHO SHOWED SOME WILLINGNESS TO TALK FOR A PRICE, BUT EVERY TIME I SHOWED UP WITH THE MONEY, I GOT THE SAME STORY..."



INSTEAD OF LEARNING THE TRUTH ABOUT LLOYD VERNON'S DISAPPEARANCE, I WAS CONFOUNDED BY EVEN MORE OF A MYSTERY! FOR I SOON NOTICED THAT BLACK MOUNTAIN CITY WAS RAPIDLY BECOMING A GHOST TOWN..."

MORE AND MORE HOUSES ABANDONED! ONLY A FEW PEOPLE SEEM TO BE LEFT IN TOWN! I'M LICKED! I'M GOING BACK HOME... BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO SEE GRACE!

"ONLY WHEN I FELT I WASN'T GOING TO SEE GRACE VERNON AGAIN, EVER, DID I REALIZE HOW MUCH I CARED FOR HER..."

...I'M TELLING YOU I *LIED*, THAT I'M A NEWSPAPER REPORTER, BECAUSE I KNOW HOW I'M *REALLY* IN LOVE WITH YOU! I CAN'T LEAVE HERE WITHOUT YOU!

I UNDERSTAND, ROD...YOU HAD A JOB TO DO! BUT I TOLD YOU BEFORE, THERE ARE THINGS ABOUT ME YOU JUST DON'T KNOW! I *CAN'T* GO WITH YOU!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'VE DONE... DON'T EVEN WANT TO HEAR!

OF COURSE YOU WANT TO KNOW, ROD...IT'S THE FAULT OF THE BLACK MOUNTAINS! MY FATHER ORDERED A SECTION OF MOUNTAIN BLASTED AWAY BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THERE WAS A BIG COPPER VEIN THERE! BUT IT WAS *PITCHBLENDE*, ROD!

THERE WAS HIGH RADIOACTIVITY, SO THE ENDANGERED PEOPLE *MOVED AWAY!* BUT THE RADIOACTIVITY HAD A STRANGE EFFECT, *LEFT LIVING IMAGES* OF THE PEOPLE BEHIND! AS THE EFFECT WORE OFF, THE *IMAGES VANISHED!* THAT'S WHY I CAN'T TELL YOU *WHERE* FATHER IS...OR MY *OWN REAL* BEING!

Y-YOU MEAN... YOU, GRACE... YOU'RE *NOT REAL?* JUST AN *IMAGE?*

GRACE VERNON NEVER ANSWERED, CHIEF! SHE FADED AWAY, *VANISHED!*

MITCHELL, I WARNED YOU NOT TO MAKE A FOOL OF ME! *GET OUT! YOU'RE FIRED!*

I WAS PLANNING ON LEAVING ANYHOW, HARNEY! I'VE GOT TO FIND GRACE VERNON...THE *REAL* GRACE! I'M IN LOVE WITH HER!

EDITOR MATT HARNEY STOOD STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW MOODILY FOR FIVE MINUTES, THEN TURNED AROUND, STARTLED...

OH, SO YOU'VE CHANGED YOUR MIND, MITCHELL! ARE YOU READY TO TELL ME THE *TRUTH?*

HARNEY SOON *KNEW* THE TRUTH, FOR ONE MOMENT ROD MITCHELL'S *IMAGE* WAS SITTING THERE, SILENTLY SMILING...THE NEXT INSTANT, *IT WAS GONE!*

THE END

EARL'S ECHO

My name is John Powell. If you look me up in the classified telephone book you will find that I am listed as an "acoustic expert." Sounds good, doesn't it? Well, that's how I make my living for actually what I do is to study sounds. When there is trouble in a recording studio with the equipment, they send for me. Or if a scientist wants to magnify certain vibrations, then I am his man. If you have trouble with your car, I can listen to the motor and analyze the difficulty from the sounds.

I make a good living so there is no complaint. Then one day I get a phone call from the British Embassy. A lord Harrington and his daughter are going to visit me. What time will be convenient?

"Make it ten tomorrow morning," I replied over the phone. "My office is in my house. Corner red brick house on Alterton Avenue."

I have to have my office in my house because I need a lot of room for my equipment, and some of it I have invented and that brings in the extra money. They certainly are punctual. He's a thin middle-aged man. And she's beautiful with those big brown eyes and dark jet black hair. Her name is Pamela and I like it. She does the talking for her father.

"We own a castle in England. Near Strattsfordshire in the south of England," she tells me. It has been in the family for more than six hundred years, but for the last fifty years it had been unoccupied. There are voices in the castle. The walls speak and that is sufficient to drive anyone mad who would have to stay there."

"You heard those voices yourself?" I asked.

"Of course," she smiles back. "The main voice is that of our famous ancestor, Sir Roger Harrington. He captured many Spanish ships and won a fortune for himself and his queen. Then for some strange reason, he had a quarrel with his best friend, George Kamstan. Both had their own ships and a terrible battle took place.

A sort of a curse was then placed upon our family by the dying George Kamstan. There would be no peace until the two families were re-united. This so affected Sir Roger Harrington that he came to the castle and never left it. According to tradition he has hidden a vast treasure there. And with it a paper that gives ownership only when there is peace and harmony among the two families."

"If you believe all that," I said, "You really don't need me. Tear the castle down. Stone by stone and find the treasure. That is, provided it is there."

Maybe this was an attempt to be funny. She just ignored it and came to the point of their visit.

"We want you to come to England with us," she continued. "We are going to open the castle and live in it. Our finances are rather low due to the high taxes. If you can find the treasure it would help us. Since by special law, all ancient treasures that are found are tax free. Actually, Queen Elizabeth gave Sir Roger Harrington what is known as a patent. A document saying that the fortune he earned was for himself and his heirs, forever and without any diminution."

I figured that if they were willing to pay me, I would go along and see what I could do. We discussed the terms. They agreed to pay all my expenses to England and back home again. Also about one hundred and fifty dollars a week for a period of not less than twenty weeks. We talked about other details and then they left, but the pretty image of Pamela was with me.

Two weeks later I was in that big cold stone castle near Strattsfordshire. In its day it could have withstood any attacking party. Lord Harrington brought some of his staff of servants with him. One thing that made the stay pleasant was the fact that I was a lot with Pamela.

"Did you do any fighting during World War II?" she wanted to know.

"I was in the army but never left Washington," I admitted. "Working on decoding enemy sound messages. Had the rank of a Major."

It was a chilly Saturday evening when the voice began to speak. The butler, James rushed into the library room where we were all seated.

"Beg pardon, sir," he addressed me, "You can hear the voice of the ghost or whatever it may be speaking. Follow me."

Which we all did and went up two flights of stairs and turned left along a narrow hall. It sounded sort of hollow but I heard the voice speak.

"The treasure is doing no good. And for this I caused the death of my best friend. The curse is still upon us. We must do something. Do something. Do something."

In my coat pocket was a miniature battery wire recording set. I flipped the button on and then told the butler to go to my room and bring a large suitcase which was on the chair next to the door. He soon returned and I opened the suitcase. It contained a special recording outfit.

Meanwhile the voice continued speaking over and over again the same message. This went on for about an hour. Then it died out. A directional needle located the stone from which the message had apparently "come".

"You believe it now," challenged Pamela. "You heard the ghost speak."

"All I heard was a voice speak. You all meet me in the library room in about an hour," I told her and her father. "I will have something to show you."

An hour later we were all in the library room. I played the tape recording of the "voice" and and then explained some technical details in non-technical language.

"If a person were to repeat that message over and over again, there would always be some difference in pitch and spacing of the words. I checked the message carefully. Each repetition is exactly the same as the previous one. This could only have one meaning. That a recording is being played."

"Why?" contended Pamela. "It still could be the voice of a ghost that somehow has become impregnated in the stone, and hence repeats itself each time."

"The Echo of the Earl," I half teased.

"He was an Earl, said Pamela in a very serious mood as she looked at me. "There's something strange about just now. As though you aren't you but somebody else."

"Let's call a halt to all of this," I suggested. "We will have the stone removed tomorrow. You get some workmen from the village."

However early the next morning there was a special delivery air mail letter for me from my aunt in California. I read it and turned white. Pamela saw me as I was trembling.

"Sick?" she wanted to know.

"No," I told her. "But I want to get that stone out of the wall and do some further checking. I love you. Does that mean anything to you?"

"They do say you Americans are so romantic," she laughed. "I have a level head on my shoulders. Let us just stick to work."

"It isn't as simple as that," I replied. "Love will play a part in solving this mystery. I know it."

The workman came and removed the big stone. There was a passage way behind that stone. A narrow staircase that took us down to a room way below the surface of the earth. We found a big chest and Lord Harrington had it opened. A fortune in diamonds, pearls, and bullion greeted our eyes. And there was a rolled parchment. It was opened and Lord Harrington read it:

"The curse shall be lifted when the two families are united."

Later we all ate and there was a peculiar silence when we went into the library room.

"You can record a message on magnetic wire or tape," I said to Pamela. "Let us say that somehow the shoutings of the Earl became recorded on that stone. I can't prove this scientifically. When the temperature changed, the message was heard. I am certain you will find a high iron ore content in that stone."

"Then you do believe in the ghost," said Pamela.

"Will you marry me?" I demanded.

"Ho, ho, she grinned. "Now I am an heiress and you want me for my fortune."

"I want you first of all for yourself," I replied. And then slowly I added something else.

Perhaps it was destiny that brought us together. The letter from my aunt told me I was the last male living descendent of George Kumston who was born in Turkey in the year 1523 and became a subject of Queen Elizabeth and was knighted for his bravery. I knew that some of my ancestors on my mother's side had come from Turkey."

We all live in that castle now. It has a lot of improvements including running water and electric heat. Sure, I enjoy the life of a rich gentleman in England with a beautiful wife."

THE END

SECRET of the ICE!

YOU ARE OUR CAPTIVE, MORTAL!

WE NEED YOU!

TOO LONG HAVE WE BEEN WITHOUT BODIES!

STORY:- by KURATO OSAKI

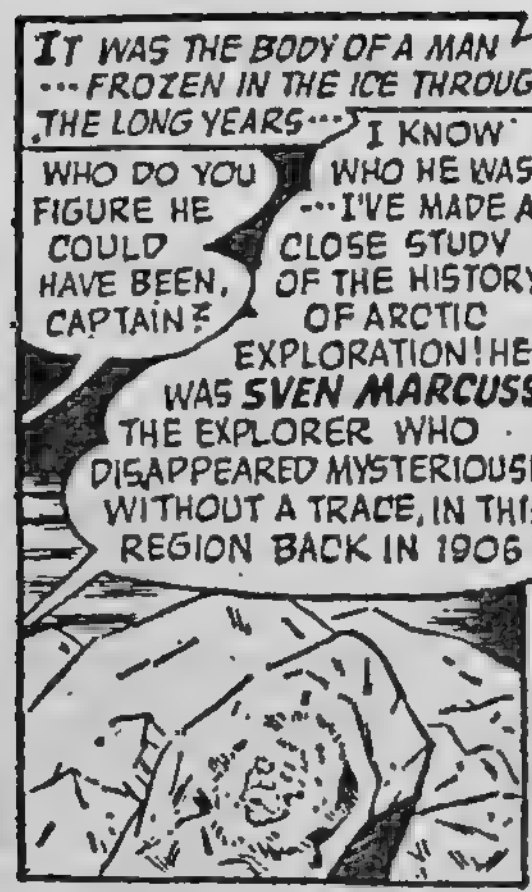
ART: PETE COSTANZA

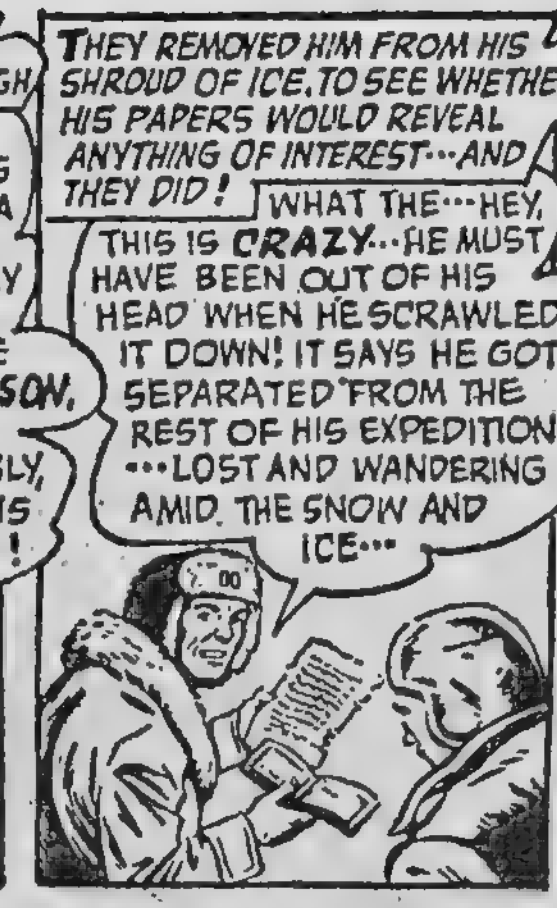
A U.S. ARMY GUIDED MISSILE HOMED IN ON A SPOT FAR IN THE ARCTIC WASTES···

BA-ROOM!

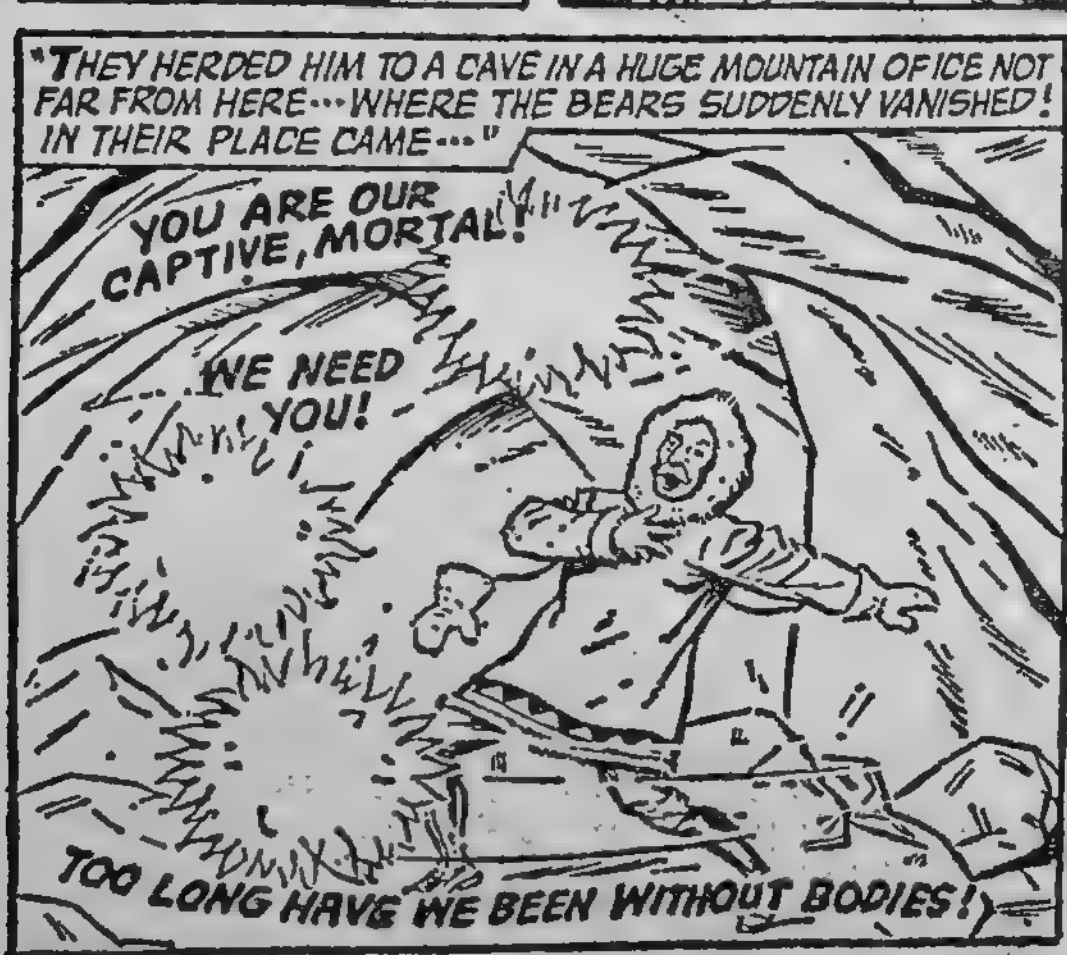
IN ITS WAKE CAME AN ARMY EXPLORATION UNIT, CHECKING ON THE ACCURACY OF ITS FLIGHT···

WELL, I'LL BE··· LOOK WHAT THE EXPLOSION HAS UNCOVERED!

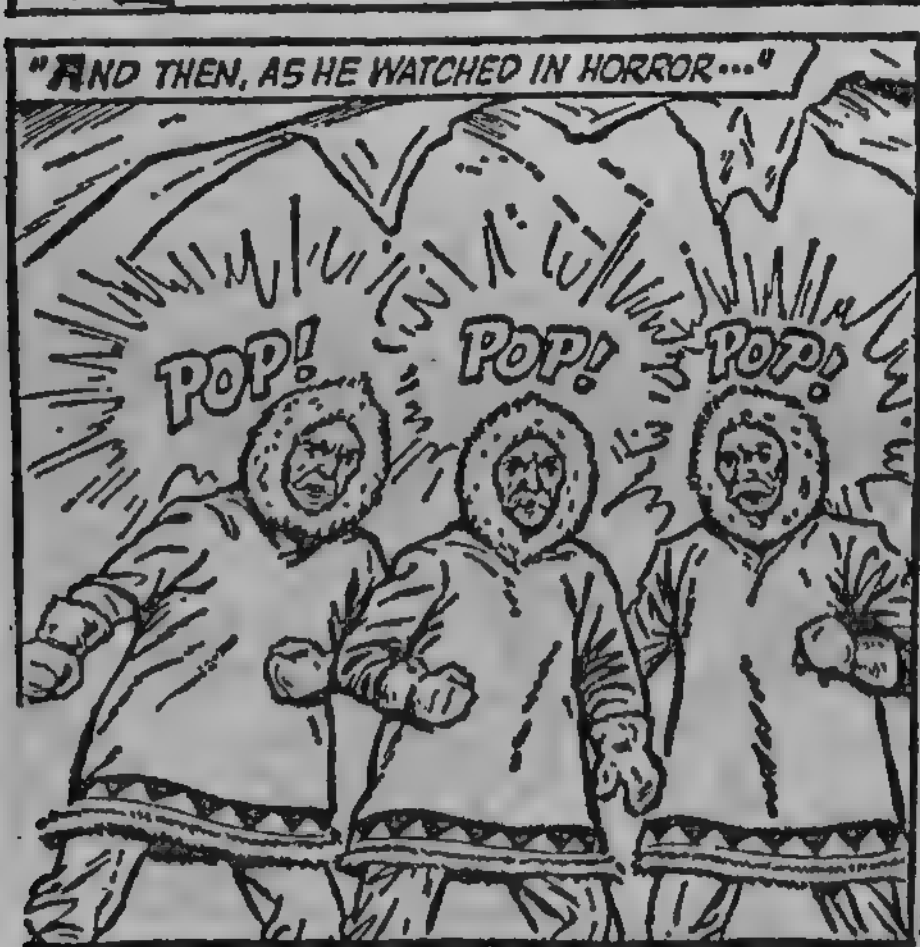

IT WAS THE BODY OF A MAN ···FROZEN IN THE ICE THROUGH THE LONG YEARS···
WHO DO YOU FIGURE HE COULD HAVE BEEN, CAPTAIN?
I KNOW WHO HE WAS ···I'VE MADE A CLOSE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF ARCTIC EXPLORATION! HE WAS SVEN MARCUSSON, THE EXPLORER WHO DISAPPEARED MYSTERIOUSLY, WITHOUT A TRACE, IN THIS REGION BACK IN 1906!


THEY REMOVED HIM FROM HIS SHROUD OF ICE, TO SEE WHETHER HIS PAPERS WOULD REVEAL ANYTHING OF INTEREST···AND THEY DID!
WHAT THE···HEY, THIS IS CRAZY···HE MUST HAVE BEEN OUT OF HIS HEAD WHEN HE SCRAWLED IT DOWN! IT SAYS HE GOT SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF HIS EXPEDITION ···LOST AND WANDERING AMID THE SNOW AND ICE···

"···WHEN HE WAS SEIZED···CAPTURED BY POLAR BEARS! THEY WRESTED HIS WEAPONS AWAY, BUT DIDN'T SEEM TO WANT TO HARM HIM···"
THIS IS··· UNBELIEVABLE··

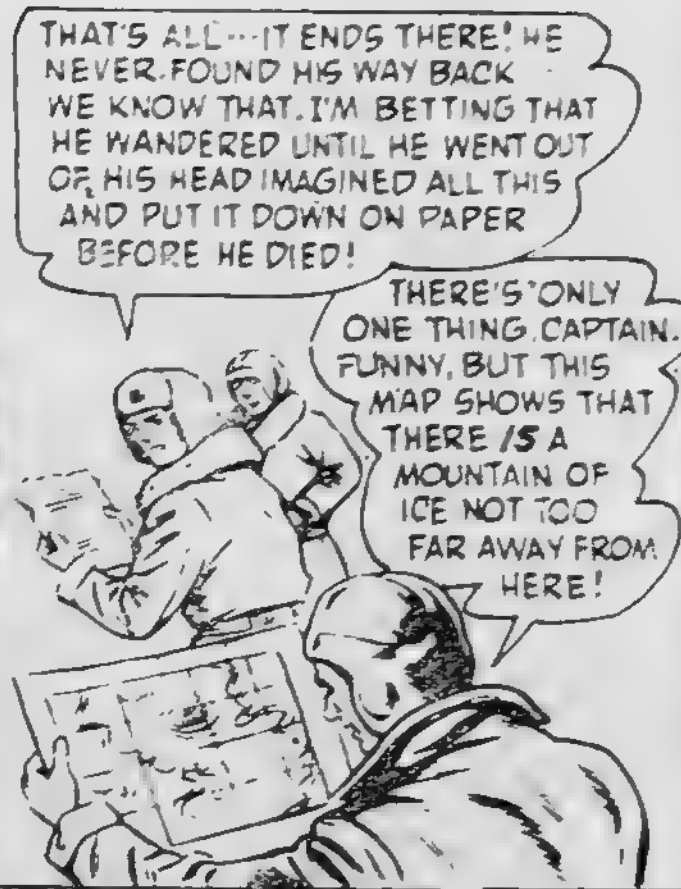

"THEY HERDED HIM TO A CAVE IN A HUGE MOUNTAIN OF ICE NOT FAR FROM HERE···WHERE THE BEARS SUDDENLY VANISHED! IN THEIR PLACE CAME···"
YOU ARE OUR CAPTIVE, MORTAL!
WE NEED YOU!
TOO LONG HAVE WE BEEN WITHOUT BODIES!

WE ARE SCOUTS FOR OTHERS OF OUR KIND!
WE WILL MAKE OURSELVES OVER IN YOUR IMAGE, SPY OUT YOUR CIVILIZATION···
···AND IF WE LIKE IT, WE WILL MAKE IT OURS!

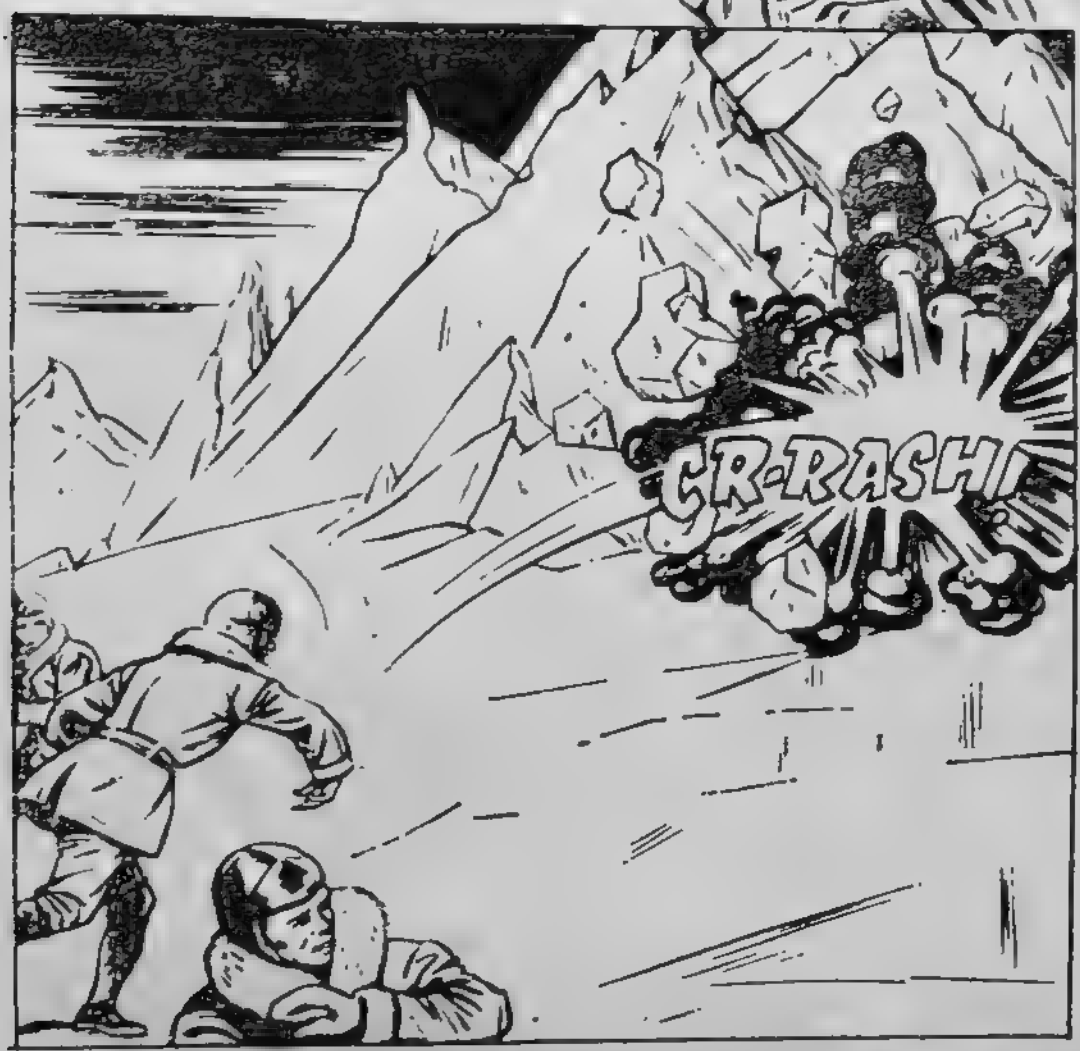

"AND THEN, AS HE WATCHED IN HORROR···"
POP!
POP!
POP!

"THE CHANGE SEEMED TO TIRE THEM···AND MARCUSSON MANAGED TO CREEP OUT OF THE CAVE WHILE THEY DOZED!"
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THEY'RE ALLOWED TO PURSUE THEIR PLAN! LUCKY I'VE GOT THIS DYNAMITE ON THE SLEDGE···

THERE---THAT SHOULD HOLD THEM IN--- I HOPE!
KER-WHAM!


THAT'S ALL---IT ENDS THERE! HE NEVER FOUND HIS WAY BACK WE KNOW THAT. I'M BETTING THAT HE WANDERED UNTIL HE WENT OUT OF HIS HEAD IMAGINED ALL THIS AND PUT IT DOWN ON PAPER BEFORE HE DIED!
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING, CAPTAIN. FUNNY, BUT THIS MAP SHOWS THAT THERE IS A MOUNTAIN OF ICE NOT TOO FAR AWAY FROM HERE!

ONCE THEY KNEW THIS, CURIOSITY GOT THE BETTER OF THEM. THE STORY SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE---BUT IT WOULDN'T HURT JUST TO SEE THE MOUNTAIN---
YOU GOTTA ADMIT THAT THERE WAS A CAVE THERE---AND THAT THE ENTRANCE IS BLOCKED UP---
STAND ASIDE, MEN. HERE'S WHERE WE TRY THIS SUPER-POWERFUL GRENADE THEY JUST ISSUED!


CR-RASH!

SEE? NOTHING! IT JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT WE SHOULDN'T GO GETTING OURSELVES IN A SWEAT ABOUT THE RAVINGS OF A DYING MAN! THE WHOLE STORY WAS IMPOSSIBLE!
IF IT WAS--- WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT?

HOLY---SMOKE! LIKE HE SAID ---THEY MADE THEMSELVES OVER INTO HIS IMAGE!

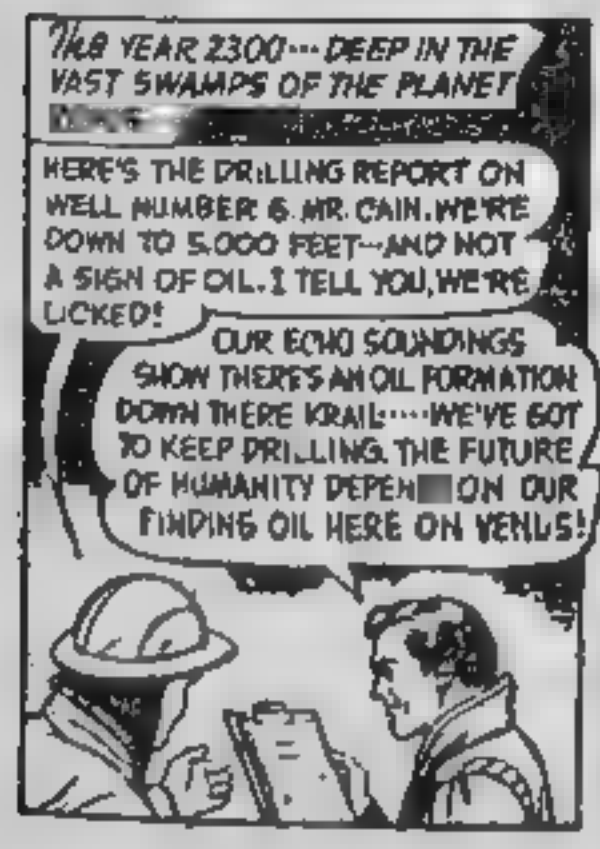
THOSE FLAMING BALLS---THEY SAID THERE WERE A LOT MORE LIKE THEM---
DO YOU THINK--- THEY'LL TRY AGAIN?
IF THEY DO--- HOW CAN WE STOP THEM?
The END!

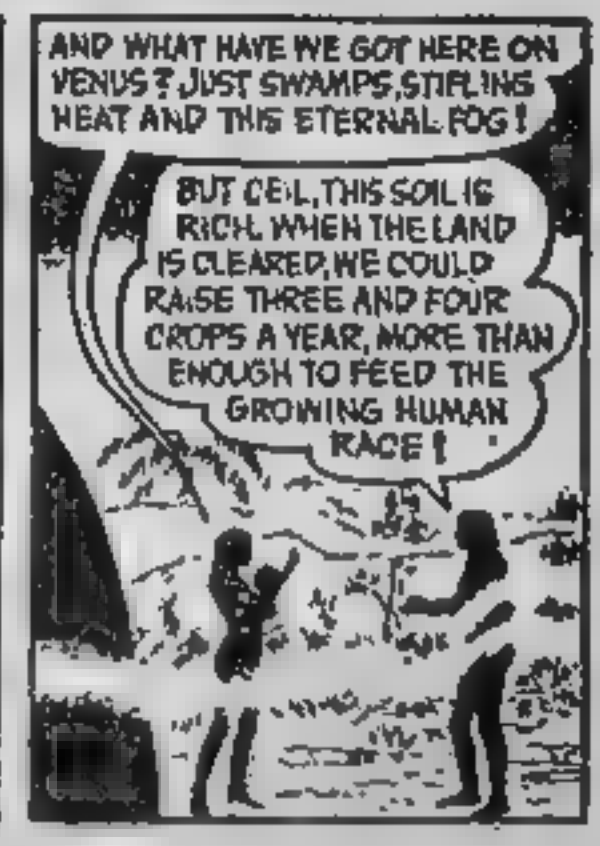
EACH GENERATION IS BORN TO MEET A NEW CHALLENGE---BORN TO FACE NEW DANGERS, CONQUER NEW FRONTIERS. BUT WHO KNOWS WHAT PERILS LIE IN WAIT FOR TOMORROW'S GENERATIONS---THE PIONEERS OF THE FUTURE WHO WILL MARCH OFF TO CONQUER--

The FRONTIER in the STARS!

I'LL STOP HIM!

A FLYING LIZARD! ALLEN--THE CHILD...





JUST THEN···

THE ALARM SIREN! SOMETHING'S TRYING TO BREAK THROUGH THE CAMP PERIMETER!

NOWEEEE!

SWIFTLY CAIN LED AN ARMED PARTY TOWARD THE STEEL FENCE THAT BOUNDED THE EXPLORATION CAMP···

THERE HE IS—HEADING FOR THE GUARD FENCE!

USE YOUR BEAM GUNS, MEN. WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM··· IF HE BREAKS THROUGH, HE'LL WRECK OUR TEST WELLS!

BLAST THESE SLOW WITTED CREATURES! HE HARDLY SEEMS TO FEEL THOSE POWER BEAMS.

THEIR REACTIONS ARE SLOW. KEEP POURING IT INTO HIM! HE'LL GET THE IDEA.

THEN, SOMEWHERE DEEP WITHIN HIS TINY BRAIN, THE SAURIAN FELT THE IMPACT OF THEIR WEAPONS, AND···

WE'VE DRIVEN HIM OFF··· LET'S GET STARTED REPAIRING THIS FENCE. WE DON'T WANT ANYMORE OF THOSE BIG ONES WANDERING INTO OUR COMPOUND.

ALLEN, THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE SAFE!

EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT, CEIL. JUST ONE OF THOSE BIG SWAMP LIZARDS TRYING TO GET THROUGH OUR FENCE AGAIN.

THOSE REPTILES··· THEY FRIGHTEN ME SO. THIS WHOLE CURSED SWAMP THRONGS WITH THEM.

THAT'S NATURAL, DEAR··· AFTER ALL, VENUS IS GOING THROUGH ITS CARBONIFEROUS AGE RIGHT NOW. BACK IN THAT PERIOD, THE EARTH WAS DOMINATED BY REPTILES.

WHY MUST WE LIVE HERE, BURIED IN THIS LOATHSOME BOG? YOU COULD HAVE A GOOD JOB BACK AT THE SPACEPORT···

CEIL, I'M A GEOLOGIST. HUNTING FOR OIL IS MY JOB, DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

NO! I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHY DOES MANKIND NEED OIL? AFTER ALL, THERE'S ATOMIC ENERGY...
ON A FOG BOUND PLANET LIKE VENUS, WE'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL OF RADIATION. IF WE USED ATOMIC ENERGY FOR ALL OUR POWER, THIS HUMID ATMOSPHERE WOULD SOON BE POISONED BY RADIO-ACTIVITY!

BESIDES, WE STILL NEED OIL TO POWER OUR TRACTORS AND SMALL VEHICLES... TO RUN OUR SWAMP BOATS, OIL TO LUBRICATE ALL MAN'S MACHINERY. WITHOUT OIL, OUR COLONIES ON VENUS WILL NEVER SUCCEED!

THIS PLANET COULD BE A FRESH BEGINNING FOR THE HUMAN RACE... A NEW FRONTIER TO ABSORB OUR TEEMING BILLIONS... A NEW WORLD FOR OUR DANNY AND THE KIDS IN HIS GENERATION!
I - I THINK I UNDERSTAND, ALLEN.

ALLEN'S DETERMINATION WAS PAYING OFF. FOR ONLY A WEEK AFTERWARD...
HERE IT IS, MR. CAIN. THE LAST CORE TAKEN FROM TEST WELL NUMBER 5.
IT'S GETTING MORE PROMISING EVERY DAY! I TELL YOU, WE'RE BOUND TO HIT THAT OIL POOL SOON!

BUT AT THAT VERY MOMENT A MENACING SHADOW DRIFTED ACROSS THE CLEARING BEHIND THE CAIN HUT
LOOK! BIG BIRDIE!

HIGH ABOVE A FLYING REPTILE SOARED THROUGH THE MISTS...

THE GREAT WINGED BEAST SWOOPED DOWNWARD...
DANNY! DANNY!

BUT ALLEN WAS THERE ON THE RUN. A BEAM RIFLE ALREADY IN HIS HAND---
ZAPPPP!
ZAPPPP!

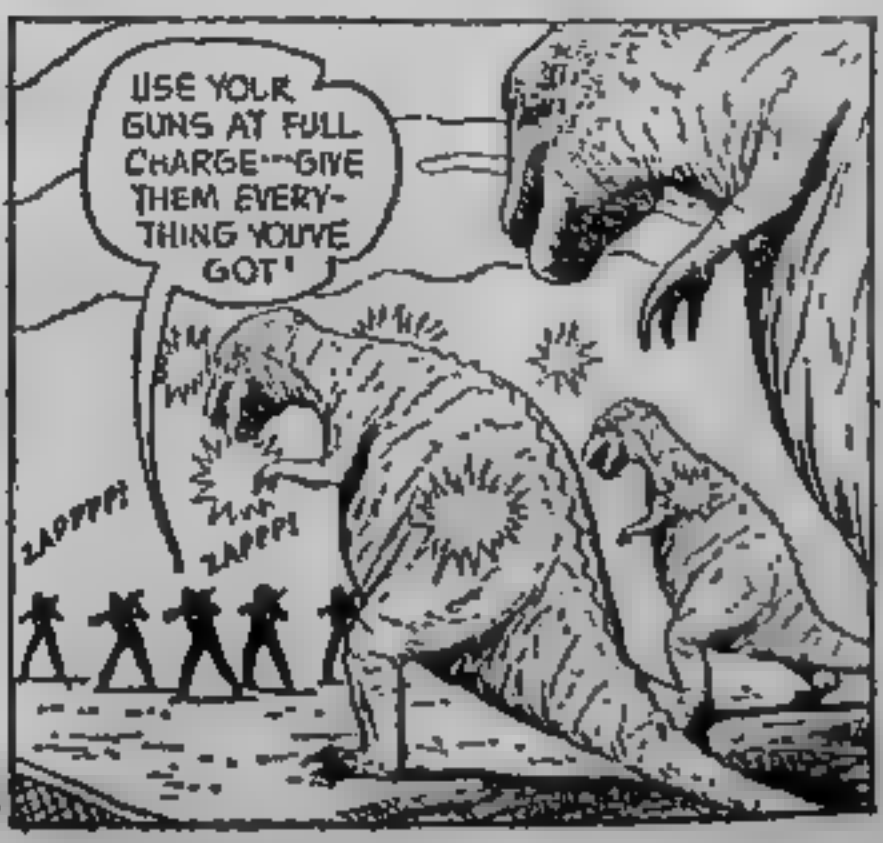
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, CEIL! THERE'S NO MORE DANGER!

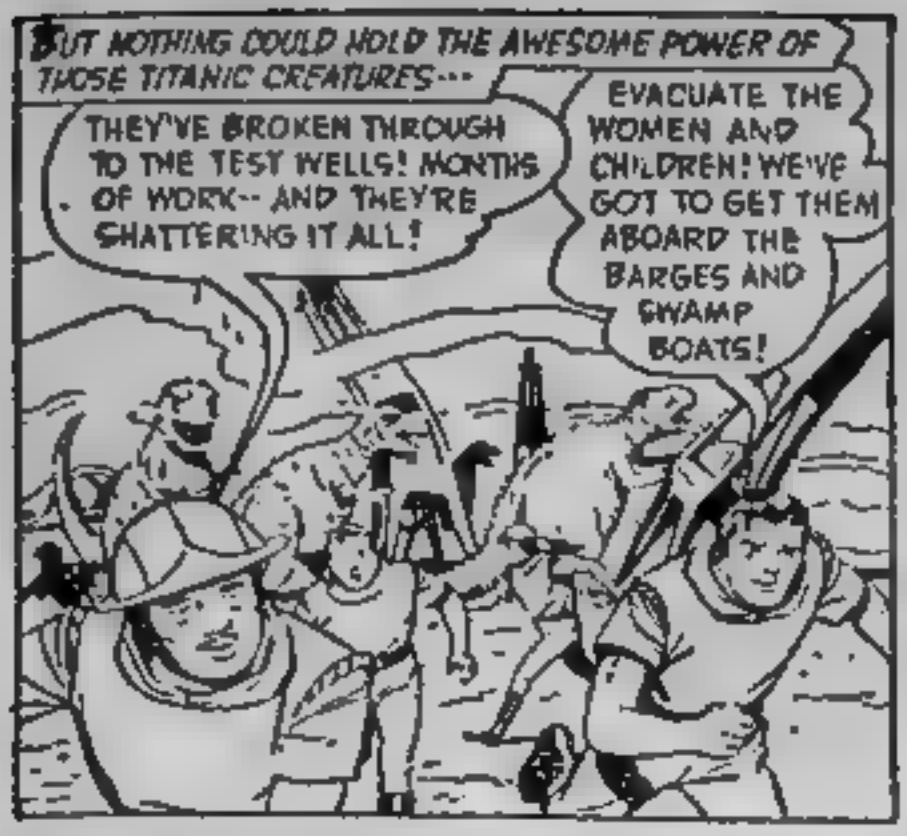
BUT THE ATTACK HAD LEFT CEIL HYSTERICAL WITH PANIC---
THAT DOES IT! I'M NOT RISKING MY BABY'S LIFE IN THIS HORRIBLE PLACE. I'M LEAVING FOR THE SPACE-PORT WITH THE NEXT MAIL HELICOPTER.
NOW WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'RE TOO EXCITED TO THINK STRAIGHT.

BUT ABRUPTLY, IN THE NEXT MOMENT---
THE SIRENS! I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER---I HAVE TO GO NOW!
HOWEEEEEE!

WHAT'S WRONG, MEN?
A HERD OF LIZARDS SIR. THEY SEEM TO HAVE CAUGHT THE SCENT OF OUR CAMP---

HERE THEY COME NOW--- ALL BRAWN AND NO BRAIN---
THAT FENCE WILL NEVER HOLD THEM! GET SET, MEN!


USE YOUR GUNS AT FULL CHARGE---GIVE THEM EVERY-THING YOU'VE GOT!
ZAPPP!
ZAPPP!


BUT NOTHING COULD HOLD THE AWESOME POWER OF THOSE TITANIC CREATURES---
THEY'VE BROKEN THROUGH TO THE TEST WELLS! MONTHS OF WORK-- AND THEY'RE SHATTERING IT ALL!
EVACUATE THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN! WE'VE GOT TO GET THEM ABOARD THE BARGES AND SWAMP BOATS!

THEY FLED IN PANIC THEN. THEIR ONLY SAFETY LAY ABOARD THE SUPPLY BARGES---
QUICKLY, EVERY-ONE GET ABOARD!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE AWESOME WEIGHT OF THE CHARGING HERD THAT DID IT—DEEP DOWN BENEATH THE QUAKING MORASS, SOMETHING BROKE LOOSE, AND---
THAT NOISE! IT SOUNDS LIKE AN EARTH-QUAKE!
R-RUMBLE!

THEN, IN THE NEXT MOMENT---
OIL! IT'S A GUSHER AT WELL NUMBER 5!
WHOOOSH!!
BARROOOM!!

ALL THOSE MONTHS OF SEARCHING AND DRILLING---AND NOW THAT WE'VE STRUCK OIL, THOSE BLASTED SWAMP BEASTS FORCE US TO EVACUATE!
WAIT KRAIL, THERE'S STILL A CHANCE! I'VE GOT AN IDEA THAT MIGHT WORK SEE IF YOU CAN RIG ME UP SOME KIND OF A TORCH---

ALLEN, DARLING--- YOU CAN'T GO BACK THERE! THOSE CREATURES---
I'VE GOT TO TAKE THE CHANCE, CEIL. I'VE GOT TO!

HE'S RUNNING TOWARD THE GUSHER!
THE TORCH! HE'S THROWING IT INTO THAT POOL OF OIL!

AS THE TORCH STRUCK THE POOL, IT EXPLODED INTO FLAMES ·
BARROOMMM!

TERROR-STRICKEN BY THEIR PRIMEVAL FEAR OF FIRE, THE GIANT REPTILES FLED···

THEY'VE GONE! AND AFTER THAT DOSE OF FIRE, THEY'LL NEVER RETURN!
COME ON MEN, LET'S GET BACK TO WORK! WE'VE GOT TO BLAST OUT THAT FIRE AND CAP THE WELL!

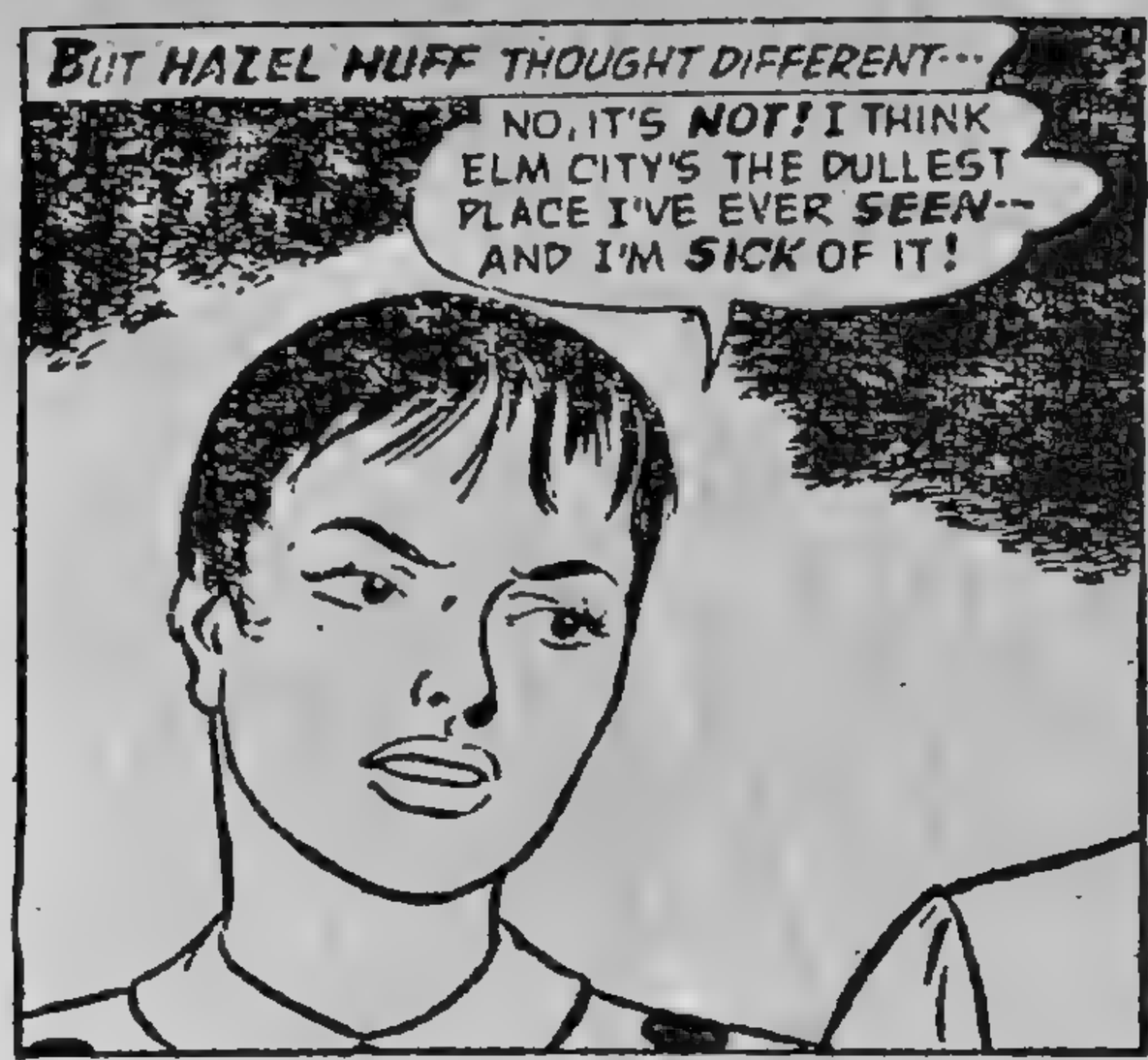
ALLEN DARLING· BACK THERE WHEN YOU WERE RUNNING TOWARD THOSE HORRIBLE CREATURES WITH THAT TORCH, I KNEW I WAS WRONG--THAT I COULD NEVER LEAVE YOU!
IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW, CEIL! WE'VE WON, DO YOU UNDERSTAND? WE'VE WON!

IT WAS AT THAT MOMENT THAT THE BLASTING HEAT MOMENTARILY BURNED AWAY THE AGE-OLD MISTS OF THE PLANET VENUS···
THE SUN! WE CAN SEE IT AT LAST!
GOOD OLD SOL! IT'S JUST LIKE BEING BACK HOME ON EARTH AGAIN!

THAT SUN IS A PROMISE, CEIL. SOME DAY MAN WILL FIND A WAY OF CONQUERING THE ETERNAL MISTS OF VENUS!
AND WHEN THAT DAY COMES, THIS PLANET WILL BELONG TO US···AND OUR CHILDREN!
The END!

NOBODY KNEW ABOUT ED TWIMBLY'S DREAMS, OR THE AMAZING RESULTS THEY WOULD LEAD TO. LEAST OF ALL HIS GIRLFRIEND HAZEL, WHO PROCLAIMED--

"ELM CITY'S The DULLEST PLACE!"


BUT HAZEL HUFF THOUGHT DIFFERENT···
NO, IT'S NOT! I THINK ELM CITY'S THE DULLEST PLACE I'VE EVER SEEN-- AND I'M SICK OF IT!

AND YOU'RE JUST AS DULL AS ELM CITY, ED TWIMBLY···SATISFIED TO LEAD A BORING LIFE, WORK AT A WORTHLESS JOB. I'M BEGINNING TO THINK THAT I MADE A MISTAKE IN EVER PICKING YOU AS A STEADY BOY FRIEND!
AW, HAZEL! YOU KNOW YOU DON'T MEAN THAT···

BUT APPARENTLY HAZEL DID MEAN IT! WHAT SHE WANTED WAS A GO-GETTER, AND SHE FOUND ONE IN GEORGE JELINEK, MANAGER OF THE LOCAL SUPERMARKET···
I DO DECLARE, GEORGE, YOU'RE THE FUNNIEST MAN···
YEAH? SAY, I WAS THINKING···HOW'S ABOUT YOU AND ME STEPPING OUT SOME NIGHT? NOT IN A ONE-HORSE PLACE LIKE THIS···WE COULD DRIVE OVER TO THE COUNTY SEAT, SEE···

AND THE FIRST THING YOU KNOW, THERE WAS POOR ED, LEFT OUT IN THE COLD···

HE WENT TO HAZEL'S HOUSE, TO PLEAD HIS CAUSE···
--AND I WAS HOPING --THAT YOU'D TAKE ME BACK, MAYBE···
TELL YOU WHAT, ED. WHEN YOU START MAKING THINGS HAPPEN TO WAKE UP ELM CITY --THAT'LL BE THE DAY I TAKE YOU BACK!

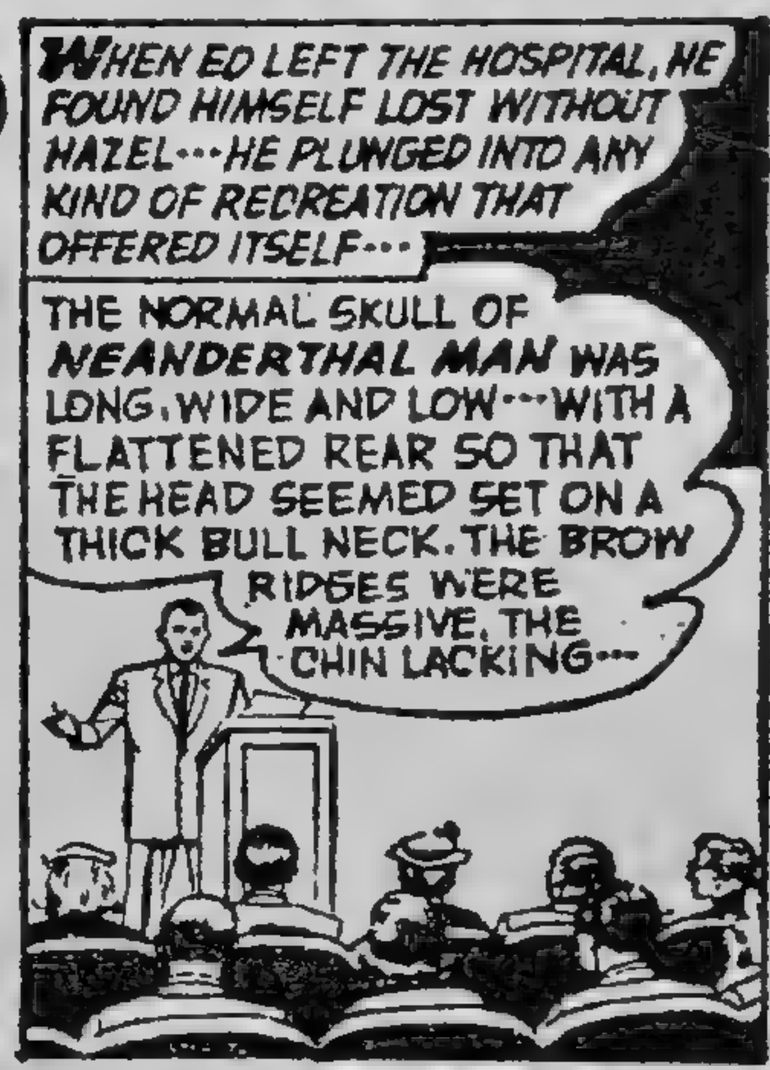
IT'S NO USE. I'VE LOST HER ···LOST MY GIRL···

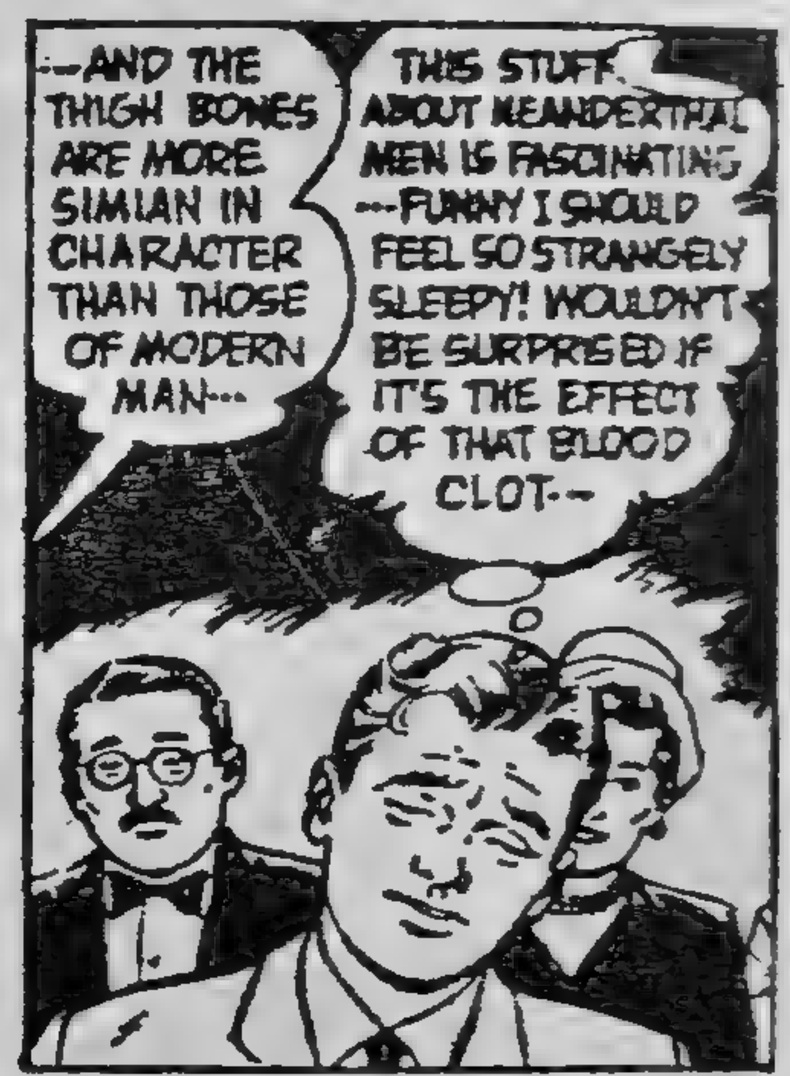
DEEP IN SADNESS, HE FORGOT TO WATCH WHERE HE WAS GOING···
LOOK OUT!
SCREECH!

WHAM!
OH-HNH! I WOULDN'T MIND THE WAY MY HEAD HURTS---IF ONLY HAZEL WOULD COME TO SEE ME!

THE X-RAYS SHOW A BLOOD CLOT ON THE BRAIN, AT AN INOPERABLE SPOT! I HOPE THAT IT'LL BE ABSORBED--- OR THAT IT WILL BREAK LOOSE AND BE CARRIED AWAY IN THE BLOODSTREAM---
WHY ARE YOU SO WORRIED, DOC?

BECAUSE VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF SUCH BLOOD CLOTS IN THAT PARTICULAR AREA! YOU'VE GOT TO BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING!
TROUBLE IS YOU'RE A WORRY-WART! EVERY-THING'LL BE ALL RIGHT, YOU WAIT AND SEE!


WHEN ED LEFT THE HOSPITAL, HE FOUND HIMSELF LOST WITHOUT HAZEL---HE PLUNGED INTO ANY KIND OF RECREATION THAT OFFERED ITSELF---
THE NORMAL SKULL OF NEANDERTHAL MAN WAS LONG, WIDE AND LOW---WITH A FLATTENED REAR SO THAT THE HEAD SEEMED SET ON A THICK BULL NECK. THE BROW RIDGES WERE MASSIVE, THE CHIN LACKING---


---AND THE THIGH BONES ARE MORE SIMIAN IN CHARACTER THAN THOSE OF MODERN MAN---
THIS STUFF ABOUT NEANDERTHAL MEN IS FASCINATING ---FUNNY I SHOULD FEEL SO STRANGELY SLEEPY! WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF IT'S THE EFFECT OF THAT BLOOD CLOT--

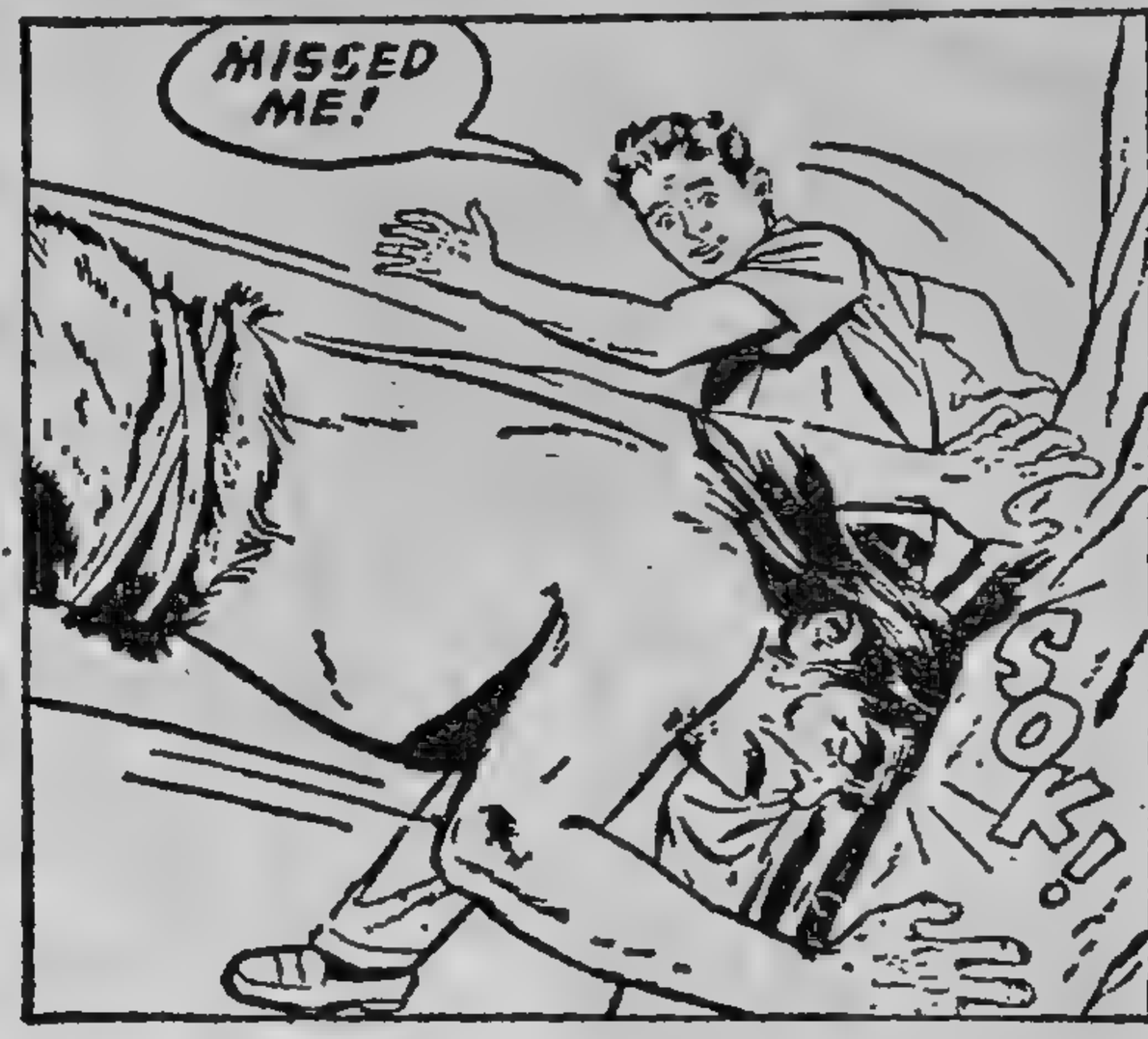
THANK GOSH I STAYED AWAKE LONG ENOUGH TO GET HOME! NOW FOR A GOOD SLEEP---I FEEL AS IF I'LL NEVER WAKE UP!

IT WAS A DEEP SLEEP, A STRANGE SLEEP. MEMORIES OF THE EVENING'S LECTURE SEEMED TO GRIP HIM--- STRANGE VISIONS SWAM INTO HIS CONSCIOUSNESS---

THEN CAME A DREAM---THE STRANGEST DREAM HE'D EVER HAD! HE WAS WANDERING, LOST, IN A STRANGE, FORBIDDING LAND---
WHERE AM I? HOW'D I EVER GET HERE---?

HUH?
THWOK!

WHY, IT WAS A NEANDERTHAL---A CAVEMAN ---MOVING IN BELLIGERENTLY---
N-NOW WAIT--- I'M A F-FRIEND---


MISSED ME!
SOK!

ULP! MORE OF 'EM!

HOW COULD HE STOP THEM? PERHAPS BY SOME MODERN DEVICE THAT MIGHT AROUSE THEIR SUPERSTITIOUS AWE---
HEY, LOOK, BOYS --- LOOK HERE!
CLICK!

OH-OH! THOSE DRY LEAVES--- THEY'VE CAUGHT FIRE---

IN A MOMENT, THE SPREADING FLAMES HAD ROUTED THE CAVEMEN···
I'D BETTER MAKE MYSELF SCARCE ··· IF THEY EVER LAY THEIR HANDS ON ME, THERE'LL BE TROUBLE! IF I CAN ONLY CLIMB THIS CLIFF AND GET OUT OF RANGE···

IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES I'LL BE AT THE TOP. THANK GOSH!

WHEW! SAFE AT LAST!
GARR-RRR!

GR-RRRRR···
EEEE-YOWWW!

NOW ED FOUND HIMSELF PURSUED FROM TWO QUARTERS···
WHAT AM I··· GONNA DO? I'M···: PUFF:··· LOSING MY WIND! THEY'LL CATCH ME SURE···IT'LL BE ALL UP WITH ME···

CATCH ME SURE ···ALL UP WITH ME···

YES, HE WAS ASLEEP, DREAMING··· BUT NOW SOMETHING VERY STRANGE WAS HAPPENING! OUT OF THE SHADOWS···

BUT THE CLUBS NEVER DESCENDED ---FOR SUDDENLY---
GROWWWFF!
ANTOR! ANTOR!
OUTSIDE, IT WAS BROAD DAYLIGHT. AT THE LOCAL SUPERMARKET---
OH, GEORGE, YOU'RE A REAL GO-GETTER! A REAL SMART MERCHANDISER--
THIS MONSTER SALE WILL MAKE ELM CITY SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE! YESSIR, YOU'VE GOTTA IMPRESS THE PUBLIC BY DOIN' UNUSUAL THINGS---
ELM CITY SUPE
MONSTER SALE
MONSTER SALE
OH, HOW CLEVER OF YOU, GEORGIE! MONSTERS FOR THE MONSTER SALE! HOW ORIGINAL!
YOU WOULDN'T CALL ELM CITY EXACTLY DULL AT THE MOMENT---
GOLLY, I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE A BIGTIME OPERATOR, AND THIS PROVES IT!
YOU---YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET! LOOK OUT THERE, HAZEL!
WHINEEEE!
GR-RRRR'
ROWWFFF!
ELM CITY

COME BACK! THAT'S NO AD!
! !
OH-HHHH! HELP!
RRRRRR...

BUT IN THIS VERY MOMENT OF PERIL...
HO-HUM! GLAD I WOKE UP... WHAT A WILD DREAM!

THEY...THEY'RE GONE! OR HAVE I BEEN SEEING THINGS?
IF YOU WERE, I MUST HAVE BEEN SEEIN' THE SAME THINGS!
POP!
POP!

POP!
POP!
POP!

HEY, WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED HERE, ANYWAY? IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN A TORNADO...THE WRECKAGE IS OUTSIDE, AS IF SOMETHING BIG HAD BURST OUT THROUGH THE WALL! WHATEVER IT WAS, I WAS IN SUCH A DEEP SLEEP I SLEPT THROUGH IT!

ELM CITY NEWS
MASS DELUSION HITS ELM CITY
SUPERMARKET SHOPPERS SWEAR TO CAVEMEN, DINOSAURS ...CLAIM THEY VANISHED INTO THIN AIR

CAVEMEN AND DINOSAURS... EXACTLY WHAT I DREAMED OF! AND THAT HOLE IN MY WALL, AS IF SOMETHING BIG HAD BUSTED OUT...AND THEN THEY SPOT THOSE THINGS DOWN AT THE SUPERMARKET! IT'S CRAZY, JUST A COINCIDENCE, THAT'S ALL...IT'S GOT TO BE...

BUT ED FORGOT IT AS THE DAYS PASSED, FOR HE HAD SOMETHING ELSE TO OCCUPY HIS THOUGHTS ... HAZEL...
SIGH! ... OH, IF ONLY I COULD GET HER BACK... BUT SHE'S SO TIED UP WITH THAT GEORGE CHARACTER THAT SHE WON'T EVEN LOOK AT ME!

HOW TO WIN HER BACK? HE WROTE TO THE ADVICE TO THE LOVELORN PROGRAM ON TELEVISION... AND GOT HIS ANSWER OVER THE AIR...
HEARTBROKEN ED WRITES THAT HIS GIRL'S LEFT HIM, AND WANTS ADVICE! MAYBE YOU CAN WIN HER BACK WITH A NEW APPROACH, ED. BE GALLANT, COURTLY, LIKE A KNIGHT OF OLD... EVERY GIRL LIKES THAT!
OKAY, WHAT CAN I LOSE? I'LL TRY IT!

YESSIR, HE WAS GOING TO LEARN THIS KNIGHTHOOD JAZZ! HE READ EVERY BOOK ON IT THAT THE LOCAL LIBRARY HAD...
PRETTY INTERESTING, BUT WHAT DO I DO? CHALLENGE GEORGE TO JOUST WITH ME? SAVE HAZEL FROM A DRAGON? HANG IT, IT'S NOT PRACTICAL!
King Arthur
Sir Lancelot
When Knighthood was in Flower
Sir Galahad

WHEN HE RETIRED THAT NIGHT, VISIONS OF KNIGHTHOOD THRONGED HIS BRAIN. HE WAS STRANGELY SLEEPY AGAIN, TOO...
CAN'T... KEEP MY EYES OPEN! I REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I FELT LIKE THIS...

...I... FIGURED IT WAS THE EFFECT OF THAT BLOOD CLOT I'VE GOT... BET THAT'S IT...

IN A SECOND, HE WAS SLEEPING HEAVILY, BUT IT WAS A RESTLESS, NIGHTMARE SLEEP. HE WAS SPINNING IN A BLACK VORTEX -- AND SOMETHING WAS PRODDING HIM, PRODDING HIM...
LEAVE ME... ALONE...

BUT THE DISTURBANCE WAS INSISTENT. WEARILY, HE OPENED HIS EYES... AND THERE, TO HIS AMAZEMENT...
HEY, WHAT'S THE IDEA OF WAKING ME UP? I WAS SO SLEEPY, I... GULP!
UP, EVIL WIZARD! THOU ART MY PRISONER!

WHY, HE HAD BEEN TRANSPORTED BACK IN TIME ... TO MEDIEVAL ENGLAND! HE WAS BROUGHT BEFORE KING ARTHUR ... AND MERLIN, THE ROYAL WIZARD ...

YOU JEST, KING ARTHUR! HOW COULD THE MAGIC OF THIS STRANGER BE GREATER THAN MINE?

NEVERTHELESS, A CONTEST BETWEEN YOU WOULD BE PLEASING TO ME. SHOW THIS INTERLOPER THY WIZARDRY, OH MERLIN!

HE SHALL SOON SEE MY POWER! WATCH!

TONGUE OF DRAGON, WING OF BAT -- SOON YOU'LL WONDER WHERE YOU'RE AT!

...PRESTO!

WELL, I'LL BE ...! THEY'VE CHANGED HEADS!

I ... I CAN'T DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT ... YOU SEE, I'M REALLY NOT A MAGICIAN AT ALL ...

THOU LIEST! SHOW US THY MAGIC OR LOSE THINE HEAD PERMANENTLY!

NOW WHAT AM I GONNA DO? SAY, WAIT -- MAYBE CARRYING A TRANSISTOR RADIO AROUND WITH ME MAY COME IN HANDY, AFTER ALL!

HAVE YOU TRIED CRUNCHY-WUNCHY, THE CEREAL THAT'S WOWING 'EM FROM COAST TO COAST? DO YOU KNOW ITS LOCKED IN GOODNESS? IT'S FRESH, CRISPY, NOURISHING, DEELICIOUS --

...AND MOMMY WILL BE GLAD TO GIVE IT TO YOU! OH, YOU'LL LOVE CRUNCHY-WUNCHY ... IT'S GREAT, WONDERFUL, MAGNIFICENT ...

ENOUGH! ENOUGH! SEIZE THE EVIL WIZARD -- STRIKE OFF HIS HEAD!

THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING FOR ED TO DO--- RUN! BUT HIS PURSUERS CLOSED IN RELENTLESSLY---
I--- I CAN'T GET AWAY---I CAN'T OUTRUN A HORSE---

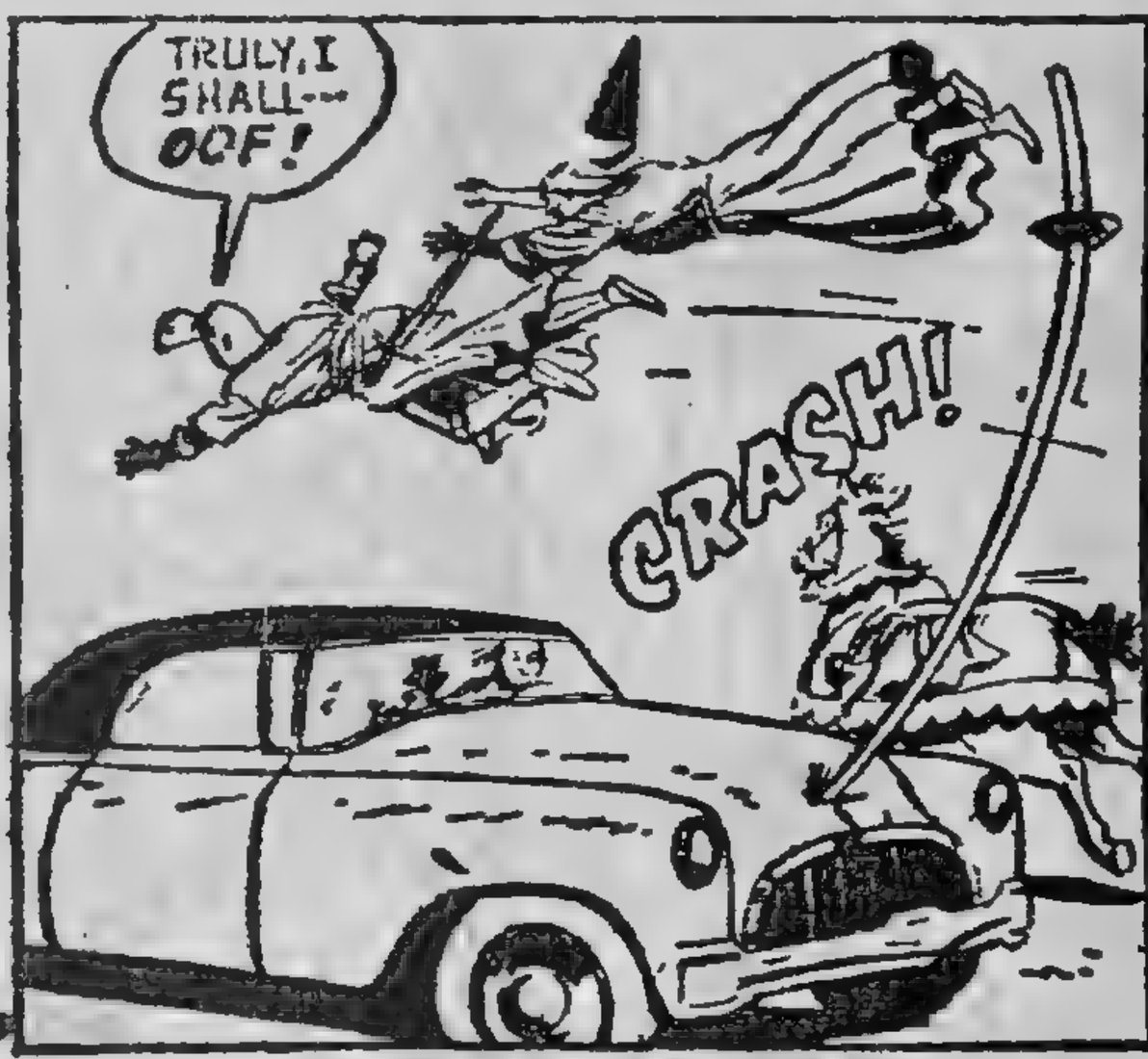
---THEY'LL HAVE ME---IN A SECOND---

THEN, FROM THE SHADOWS OF HIS ROOM--ONCE MORE, THE UNBELIEVABLE WAS HAPPENING--

NOW TO CARRY OUT KING ARTHUR'S SENTENCE---
THERE IS TIME ENOUGH FOR THAT LATER! FIRST, I WOULDST SEE THIS STRANGE LAND INTO WHICH WE HAVE COME!

WHEN DAYLIGHT CAME---
STOP
WHAT THE---! HEY, YOU TWO, CAN'TCHA SEE THE SIGN SAYS STOP?

BEHOLD, A STRANGE MONSTER---VERILY, A NEW-TYPE DRAGON! I SHALL CHALLENGE IT!


TRULY, I SHALL--- OOF!
CRASH!

EGH-OH···IT'S GEORGE AGAIN···
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY CAR, YOU ···YOU IDIOTS! WHATS THE BIG IDEA OF THE DUMB GETUPS, ANYWAY ···YOU MUST BE DRUNK!
THOU ANGERSTS ME, KNAVE ···AND WHEN MERLIN IS ANGERED···
ARF!

···MERLIN'S MAGIC FOLLOWS!
TONGUE OF DRAGON, WING OF BAT-- SOON YOU'LL WONDER WHERE YOU'RE AT!
HOGWASH!
ARF!

···PRESTO!

BUT AT THAT VERY MOMENT···
RRRINNGGGG!
OH, BOY, WHAT A DREAM ···MERLIN AND THAT KNIGHT CHASING ME AND ALL···I'M GLAD TO BE AWAKE!

MY···MY OWN HEAD'S BACK ON, THANK GOSH!
POP!
POP!

AN HOUR LATER, WHEN ED PASSED THE SPOT, THEY WERE STILL ARGUING ABOUT IT ALL···
AT FIRST WHEN I SPOTTED THOSE TWO ON THE HORSE, I FIGGERED THEY WERE DRESSED FOR A MASQUERADE OR SOMETHIN'-- AFTER ALL, A KNIGHT IN ARMOR AND A FUNNY OLD GEEZER WITH A BEARD···
NONSENSE! EITHER YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING, OR IT'S ANOTHER CASE OF MASS DELUSION, LIKE THOSE CAVEMEN AND DINOSAURS!
OH, N-NO!

NONSENSE! WAS IT MASS DELUSION THAT DID THIS TO MY CAR? AND THEN THAT TRICK THE OLD FELLA PULLED--IF IT DIDN'T SOUND CRAZY, I COULD SWEAR HE SWITCHED MY HEAD WITH THE DOG'S!
THE VERY SORT OF THING I WAS DREAMING ABOUT-- EVEN THE SAME CHARACTERS! IT CAN'T BE A COINCIDENCE···IT JUST CAN'T!

I'M SURE THE WHOLE THING'S CONNECTED SOMEHOW WITH THAT BLOOD CLOT ON MY BRAIN! SOMEHOW, WHEN I DREAM, I ENTER ANOTHER DIMENSION---AND THE CREATURES THERE ARE ABLE TO FOLLOW ME BACK INTO MY OWN WORLD! THEN, WHEN I WAKE UP, THE CONTACT BETWEEN THE DIMENSIONS IS SHATTERED--- AND EVERYTHING THAT DOESN'T BELONG HERE DISAPPEARS!

NO WONDER ELM CITY HAD BEEN ANYTHING BUT DULL LATELY! LOST IN THOUGHT, ED BLUNDERED SQUARELY INTO---

HAZEL!

OH!

5

WHY CAN'T YOU EVEN LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING? I DECLARE, ED. TWIMBLY, YOU'RE THE CLUMSIEST, MOST MISERABLE SPECIMEN---

PLEASE DON'T SCOLD ME, HAZEL --- I'VE BEEN SO LONESOME FOR YOU! ISN'T THERE SOME WAY WE CAN GET TOGETHER AGAIN, THE WAY WE USED TO BE?

I LOVE YOU SO---AND I WANT TO MARRY YOU!

ME---MARRY YOU? I'D PROBABLY HAVE TO KEEP ON WORKING FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE! I WANT SOMEBODY WHO CAN GIVE ME A GOOD, EASY LIFE---AND THAT'S NOT YOU! SO DO ME A FAVOR---GET OUT OF MY HAIR!

AW, GEE---

THAT NIGHT, TO DROWN HIS WOES, ED WENT TO THE MOVIES. IT WAS A PIRATE PICTURE, ALL ABOUT A BUCCANEER OUT OF HISTORY--CAPTAIN MALEVO, CRUELEST AND RICHEST OF ALL PIRATES--

LUCKY GUY---HE HAD MORE MILLIONS THAN YOU COULD SHAKE A STICK AT---

IF SOMEBODY COULD GO BACK TO HIS TIME, THEY MIGHT GRAB OFF SOME OF THAT TREASURE! WELL, I CAN GO BACK---IN ONE OF MY DREAMS! AND IF I CAN ONLY FIGURE OUT SOME WAY SO THE TREASURE WON'T DISAPPEAR WHEN I WAKE UP---

YES, HE COULD DO IT---AND IF HE WERE LUCKY, SOME-NOW HE MIGHT GAIN ENOUGH WEALTH TO BE SURE OF HAZEL! BUT IF HE WAS GOING TO DREAM OF MALEVO, HE'D HAVE TO CONCENTRATE ON HIM FIRST, AND SO --BACK TO THE LIBRARY---

GOSH, THAT MALEVO'S A MEAN-LOOKING CUSS! ANYWAY, I'VE READ ENOUGH ABOUT HIM---IT'S PRACTICALLY COMING OUT OF MY EARS!

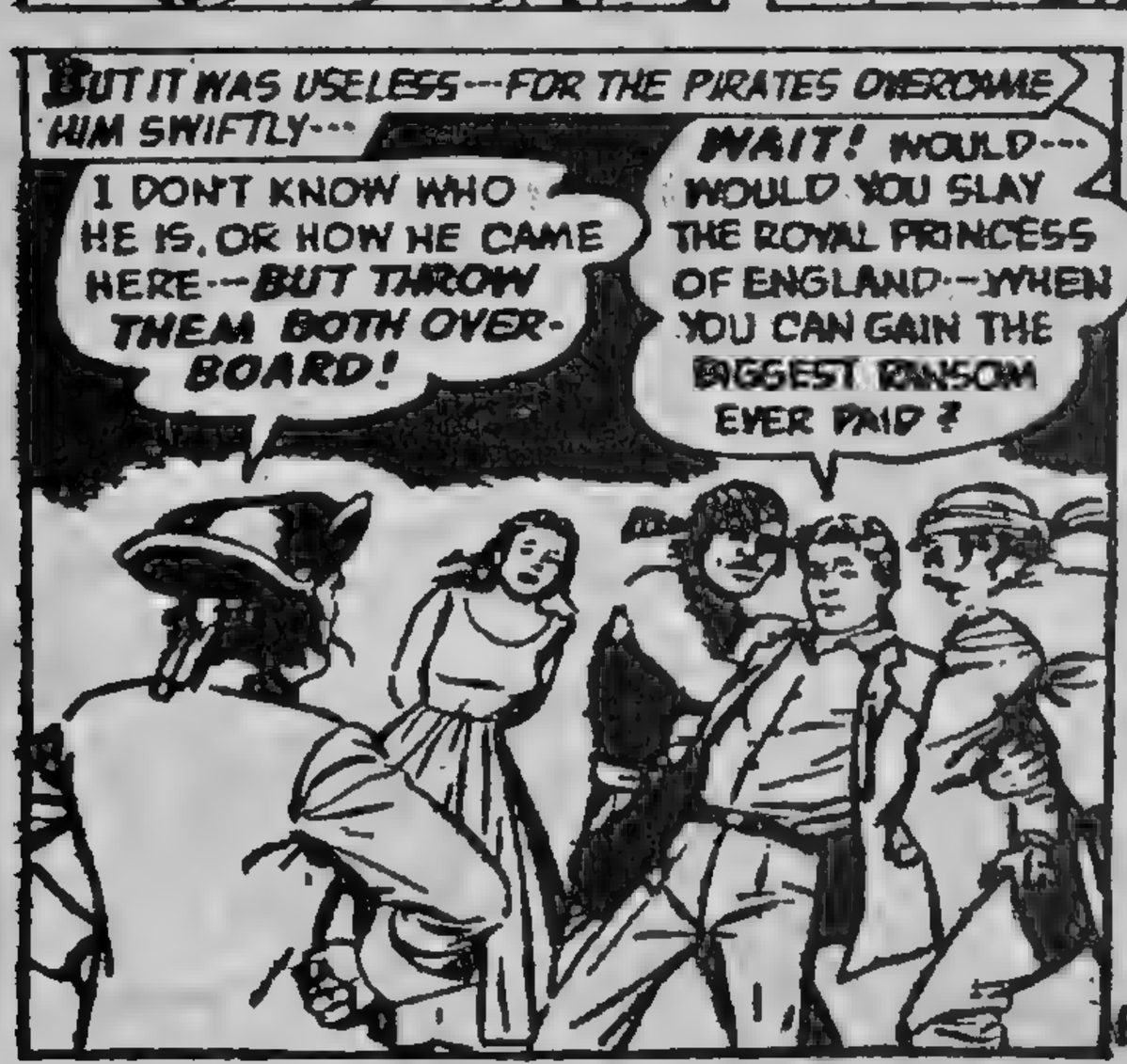
BUT HE COULDN'T TELL. WHEN THE DREAM WOULD COME, FOR THAT DEPENDED UPON THE BLOOD CLOT IN HIS BRAIN. HE WAITED FOR WEEKS ---AND THEN, FINALLY, THAT BY-NOW FAMILIAR FEELING ---THAT SENSATION OF OVER-POWERING FATIGUE--
MALEVO---
MALEVO---WANT TO DREAM---OF HIM---

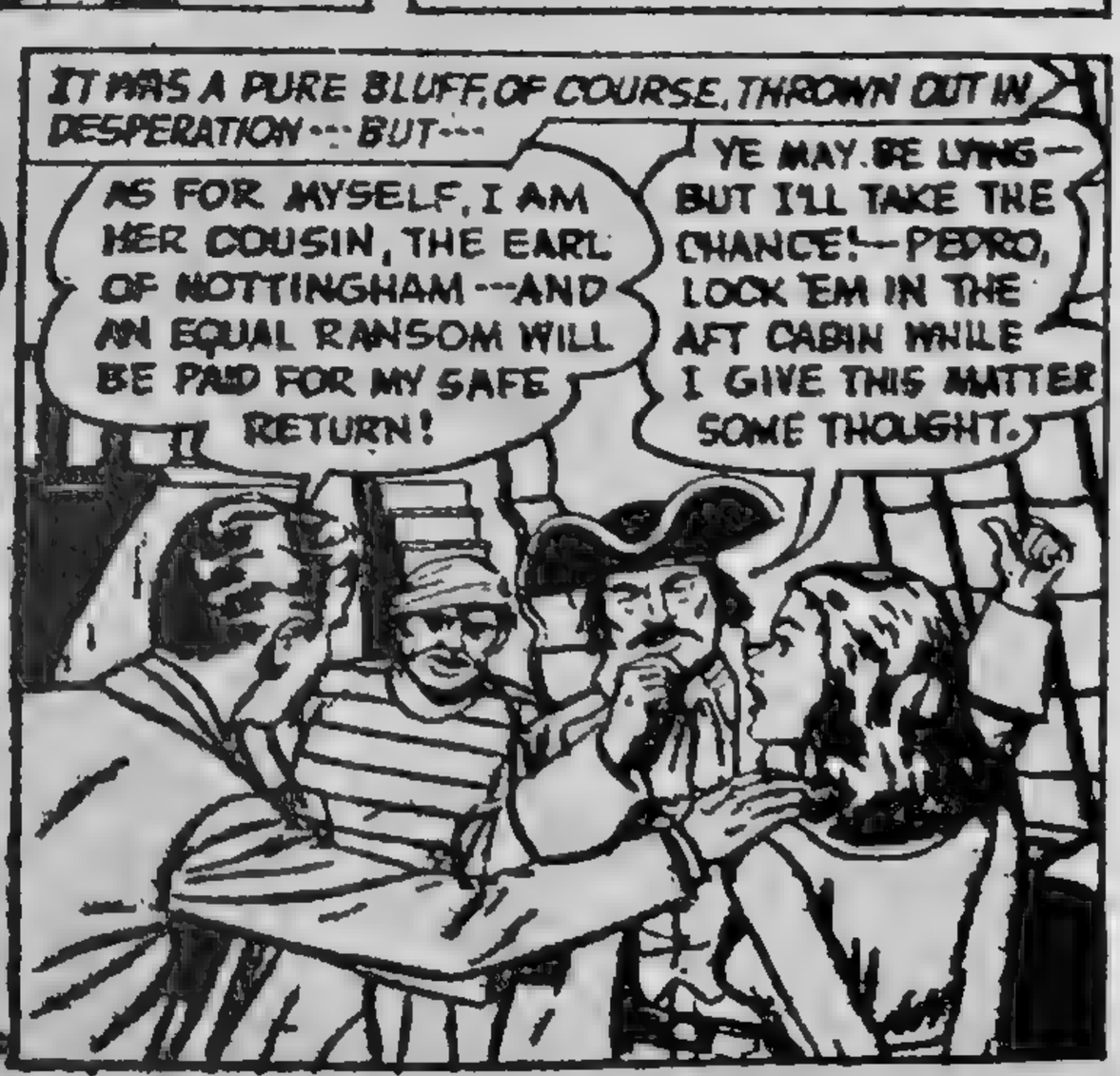
IT WAS LIKE MAGIC! HARDLY DID HIS EYES CLOSE WHEN ---
GOOD GOSH, IT'S HAPPENED! I'M ON A PIRATE SHIP, BACK IN TIME --- AND THEY'RE ATTACKING!
BOOM!
BOOM!

IT WASN'T FOR NOTHING THAT MALEVO WAS CALLED THE CRUELEST OF ALL PIRATES. HIS PREY CAPTURED, HE PROCEEDED TO DISPOSE OF THE FEW LEFT ALIVE---
THEY MADE THEM---WALK THE PLANK! THERE'S ONLY ONE LEFT NOW---A GIRL!

C'MON, NOW, LOVELY ---WALK!

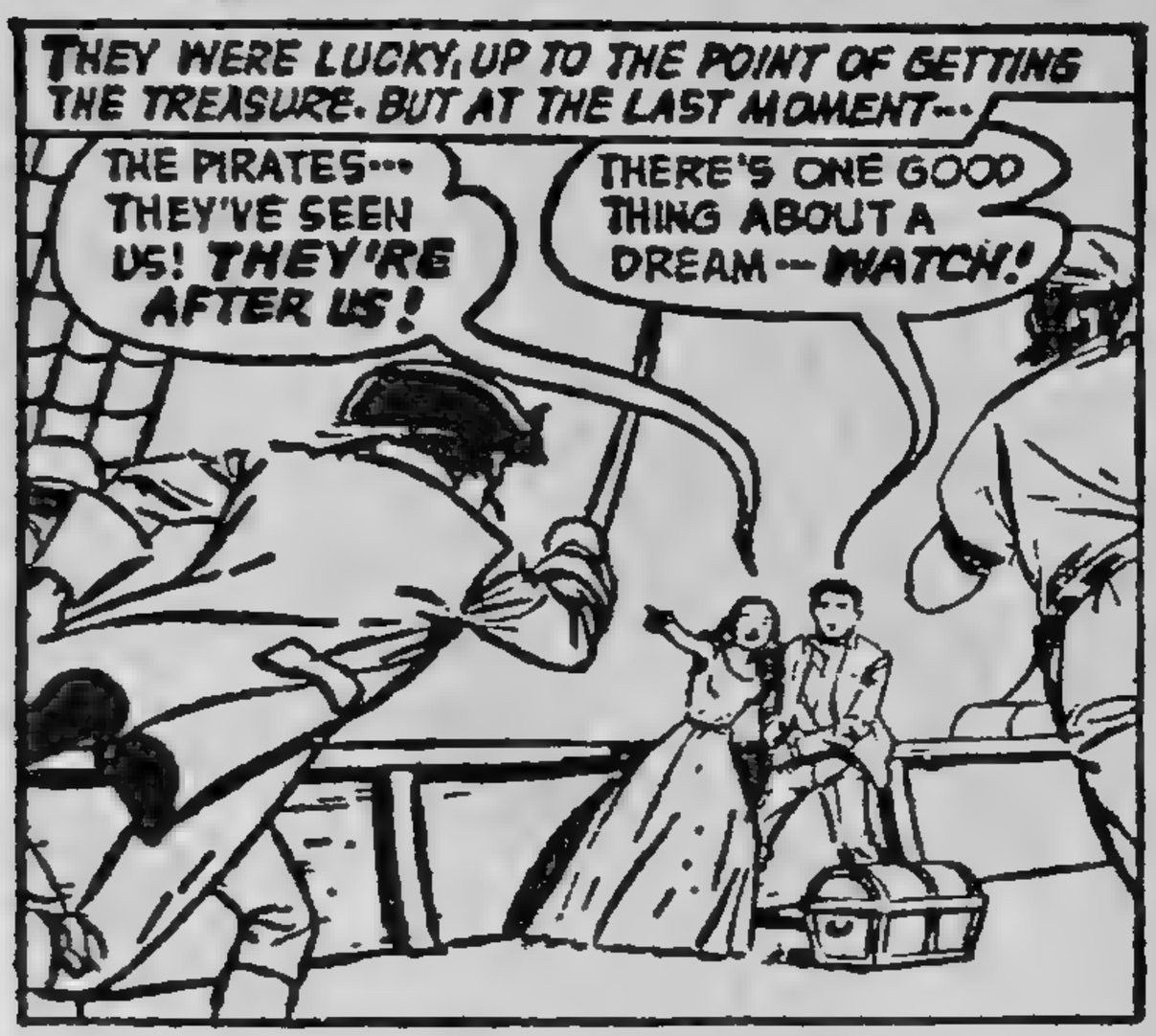
TERROR WAS PLAIN UPON HER BEAUTIFUL FACE. ED ACTED WITHOUT THINKING--
KEEP AWAY FROM HER, YOU---
THUD


BUT IT WAS USELESS---FOR THE PIRATES OVERCAME HIM SWIFTLY---
I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS, OR HOW HE CAME HERE---BUT THROW THEM BOTH OVER-BOARD!
WAIT! WOULD--- WOULD YOU SLAY THE ROYAL PRINCESS OF ENGLAND---WHEN YOU CAN GAIN THE BIGGEST RANSOM EVER PAID?


IT WAS A PURE BLUFF, OF COURSE, THROWN OUT IN DESPERATION---BUT---
AS FOR MYSELF, I AM HER COUSIN, THE EARL OF NOTTINGHAM---AND AN EQUAL RANSOM WILL BE PAID FOR MY SAFE RETURN!
YE MAY BE LYING— BUT I'LL TAKE THE CHANCE!—PEDRO, LOCK 'EM IN THE AFT CABIN WHILE I GIVE THIS MATTER SOME THOUGHT.

MY NAME IS LADY BARBARA ... AND I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE. EVEN IF IT IS ONLY TEMPORARILY! WHEN MALEVO DISCOVERS THAT YOU'VE LIED TO HIM, IT'LL BE THE END FOR BOTH OF US!
I WAS PLAYING FOR TIME ... AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO USE IT! THE PIRATES ARE CAROUSING AT THE OTHER END OF THE SHIP, AND THEY'LL NEVER EXPECT US TO TRY TO ESCAPE NOW!

WE'LL MAKE OUR WAY UP TO THE DECK ... AND THEN I'M GOING DOWN TO THE TREASURE-HOLD! THEN WE'LL MAKE A TRY FOR LAND IN A SMALL BOAT. JUST PRAY NOBODY SEES US!


THEY WERE LUCKY, UP TO THE POINT OF GETTING THE TREASURE. BUT AT THE LAST MOMENT ...
THE PIRATES ... THEY'VE SEEN US! THEY'RE AFTER US!
THERE'S ONE GOOD THING ABOUT A DREAM — WATCH!

IT WAS AN INCENDIARY GRENADE THAT ED DREAMED UP. THE PURSUING PIRATES WERE CUT OFF ...
KER-WHAM!

IT GAVE THEM PRECIOUS MOMENTS ... ENOUGH TO ESCAPE FROM THE SHIP. BUT AS SAFETY NEARED ...
I THINK WE'VE MADE IT! WE CAN LAND ON THAT ISLAND ...
LOOK!

THERE, BEARING DOWN ON THEM ...
IT'S MALEVO! AND THE SHIP ... IT'S GOING TO RUN US DOWN!

MALEVO ... HE'S BOUND TO HAVE HIS REVENGE ...

FIND OUT OF THE SHADOWY DARKNESS OF HIS ROOM ---
NO, NO--- NO---

OOF!
WHAM!

POW!

SO HE TRIPPED AND HIS CUT-LASS HIT MY HEAD, HUH? SAY WAIT ---YOU DIDN'T DISAPPEAR WHEN I WOKE UP! I'LL BET THAT BLOW ON MY NOGGIN MUST HAVE KNOCKED LOOSE THAT BLOOD CLOT! THERE'S NO WAY FOR YOU TO GET BACK TO YOUR DIMENSION ---THANK HEAVENS!
YOUR WORDS ARE STRANGE--- AND YOUR COSTUME STRANGER!

HERE'S ANOTHER THING THAT DIDN'T DISAPPEAR, THANK HEAVENS! AND AS FOR HIM---WELL, WHEN HE INSISTS HE'S A PIRATE, THEY'LL STOW HIM AWAY IN THE BOOBY-HATCH FOR GOOD!

THE NEWS SOON GOT AROUND THAT ED HAD SOMEHOW, SOMEWHERE, COME INTO MONEY---LOADS OF IT! YOU CAN BE SURE THAT HAZEL LOST NO TIME IN PAYING HIM A VISIT---
OF COURSE, IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE ---OUR QUARREL, I MEAN! YOU KNOW HOW CRAZY ABOUT YOU I'VE ALWAYS BEEN, ED, HONEY---CAN'T WE GET BACK THE WAY WE USED TO BE?
I'M AFRAID NOT, HAZEL. YOU SEE, SOMETHING HAS BEEN ADDED---

---MEET MY WIFE! WITH HER, ELM CITY WILL NEVER BE DULL!

UNCANNY MYSTERIES

The CASE of the VANISHING INDIAN!

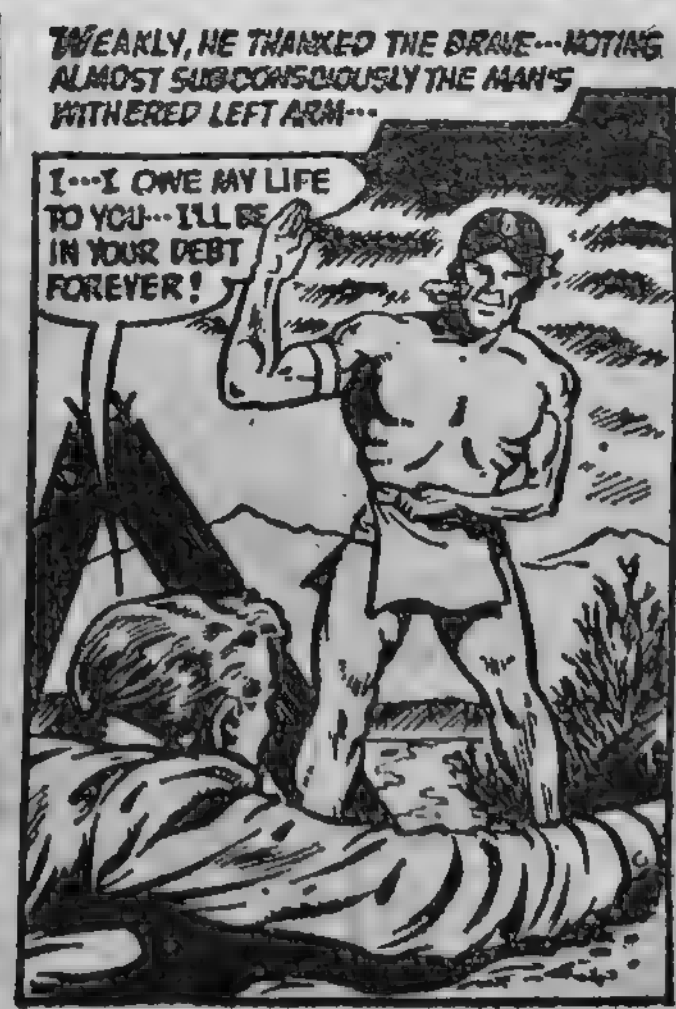
BUT ED WAS A BIT TOO OPTIMISTIC! NO SOONER HAD HE REACHED THE MIDDLE OF THE FRAIL CROSSING WHEN···
CRASH!

UNHURT, HE FOUND HIMSELF IN THE MOST DEADLY DANGER HE HAD EVER ENCOUNTERED···
IT'S···QUICKSAND! I CAN'T GET OUT!

THERE WAS NO ESCAPE···HE WAS HOPELESSLY TRAPPED! FUTILE STRUGGLES ONLY BROUGHT THE END NEARER···
GOING DOWN··· NOTHING TO SAVE ME···

THEN SUDDENLY···FROM OUT OF NOWHERE···
WHERE···WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?

THIS WAS NO MODERN INDIAN, IN BLUE JEANS AND SHIRT···HE WAS LIKE A THROW-BACK TO A BYGONE CENTURY! BUT HE HAD ARRIVED IN TIME TO SAVE ED MORRIS'S LIFE···
THANK··· HEAVENS!


WEAKLY, HE THANKED THE BRAVE···NOTING ALMOST SUBCONSCIOUSLY THE MAN'S WITHERED LEFT ARM···
I···I OWE MY LIFE TO YOU···I'LL BE IN YOUR DEBT FOREVER!

SHUDDERING, HE LOOKED FOR A MOMENT TOWARDS THE WATERY GRAVE FROM WHICH HE HAD BEEN RESCUED! HIS GLANCE HAD BEEN AVERTED FOR ONLY AN INSTANT··· BUT IN THAT INSTANT THE INDIAN HAD DISAPPEARED!
WHAT THE···! WHERE'D HE GO TO?

WHEN HE TOLD THE STORY TO THE BOYS BACK AT THE BUNKHOUSE---

BUT IT'S THE TRUTH, FELLAS! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED!

SEZ YOU! WHY, THERE HASN'T BEEN AN INJUN IN THESE PARTS FOR YEARS!

SURE--AND THE INJUNS THERE USED TO BE WERENT INTERESTED IN HELPIN' WHITE MEN--ONLY SCALPIN' 'EM!

AND A DISAPPEARING INDIAN YET--- WOTTA LAUGH!

SURE YOU WERENT DREAMIN'?

WISE GUYS! I'LL SHOW 'EM YET!

SATURDAY WAS THE BIG DAY IN TOWN--BUT ED HAD OTHER THINGS ON HIS MIND BESIDES ENTERTAINMENT-

BETTER GO ON WITHOUT ME, BOYS ---I GOT BUSINESS IN HERE!

IN THE LIBARY? THEY GOT NO DISAPPEARIN' INDIANS IN THERE, PAL!

PUBLIC LIBRARY

But---THEY DID HAVE INDIANS IN THERE---

I FOUND IT! YIPPEEE!

SILENCE

SH-HHH!

HEY, WHAT'S ED PUTTIN' UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD?

C'MON, WE'LL HAVE A LOOK!

IN 1852: ALL INDIANS OF THIS REGION WERE HOSTILE, EXCEPT ONE, WHOSE LIFE HAD BEEN SAVED BY WHITE MEN, FOR WHICH HE WAS SWORN TO HELP THEM FOREVER. HIS NAME WAS GA-KEE-GA, MEANING "HE WITH THE WITHERED ARM"

WELL, I'LL BE DURNED!

WELL, FELLAS---WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY NOW?

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, BUT---

---IT HAPPENED!

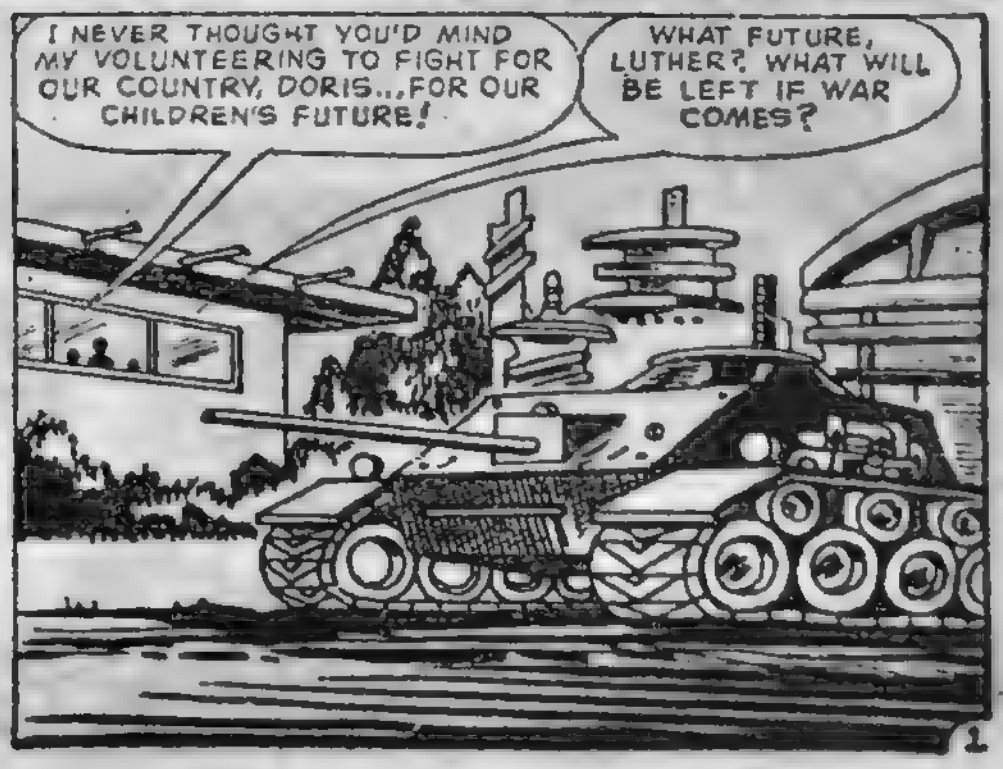
THE WORLD WAS ARMED TO THE TEETH! IT WAS 1988, AND WAR WAS IMMINENT! SO MUCH DEPENDED ON SCIENTIST ERIC NORATH'S SUBSTITUTE FOR HEAVY WATER...AND THEN THE TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED!

the DAY the WORLD ENDED!

I DIDN'T THINK THE ARMY WOULD ACCEPT A MAN WITH THREE CHILDREN AND A WIFE! BUT THEY SAID THAT WHEN WAR COMES, *EVERY* ABLE-BODIED MAN WOULD HAVE TO SERVE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER!

THE YOUNG, LIKE YOU, LUTHER, WILL BE THE SOLDIERS, THE AIRMEN, THE SEAMEN! AND WE SCIENTISTS WILL FIGHT OUR WAR IN THE LABORATORIES! WELL, DORIS, ARE YOU PROUD OF YOUR HUSBAND AND YOUR FATHER?

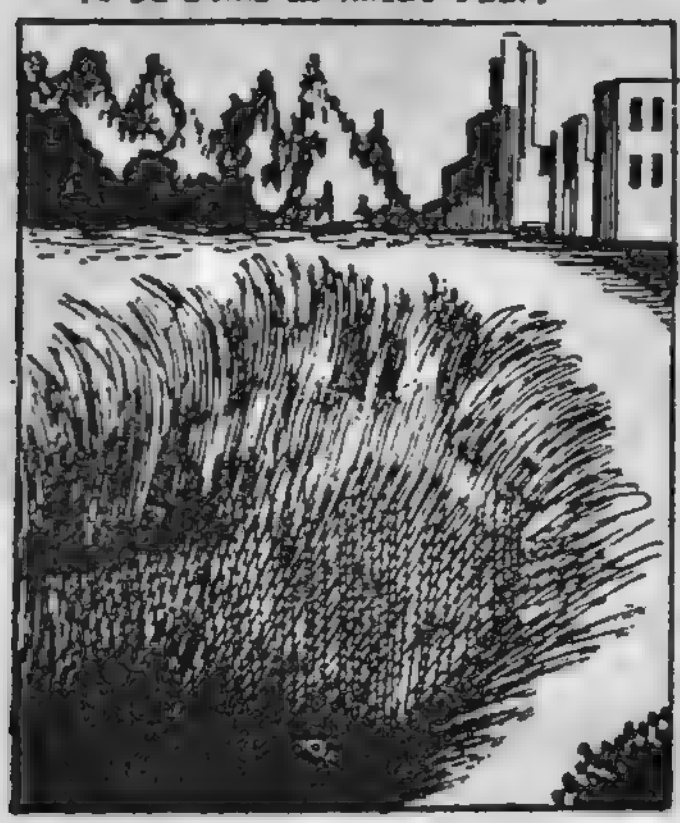
ROBERT P. SALE '523



IT HAPPENED JUST A FEW DAYS LATER! THAT MORNING, ERIC NORATH WAS IN HIS LAB WITH HIS ASSISTANTS...

ALL RUSHED OUT AND STOOD GAPING WITH AWE AS THE FANTASTIC SOLVENT ATE A GREAT PIT BELOW AND AROUND THE BIG LABORATORY BUILDING...

WITHIN A DAY, THE SOLVENT HAD EATEN AWAY SEVERAL SQUARE MILES OF EARTH, AND THE ABYSS IT LEFT WAS ESTIMATED TO BE SOME 25 MILES DEEP!



DR. ERIC NORATH WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO ADVISE HIS COLLEAGUES OF THE DANGER OF HIS DISCOVERY...

ERIC LOOKED GRAVELY, GRIMLY AT HIS COLLEAGUES...

ERIC NORATH'S WARNING TO ALL THE WORLD WAS GREETED CYNICALLY BY THE ENEMY...THEY SUSPECTED THAT WE WERE TRYING TO DELAY CONFLICT TILL THE FAMOUS SCIENTIST NORATH MIGHT SUCCEED IN PRODUCING HEAVY WATER IN HIS LAB! MEANWHILE, THE SOLVENT'S DESTRUCTION SPREAD THROUGH TOWNS AND COUNTRYSIDE...

ERIC MADE A WORLDWIDE APPEAL VIA INTERCONTINENTAL TELEVISION...BUT IN ENEMY CAPITALS THERE WAS ONLY SCORN FOR HIS WORDS...

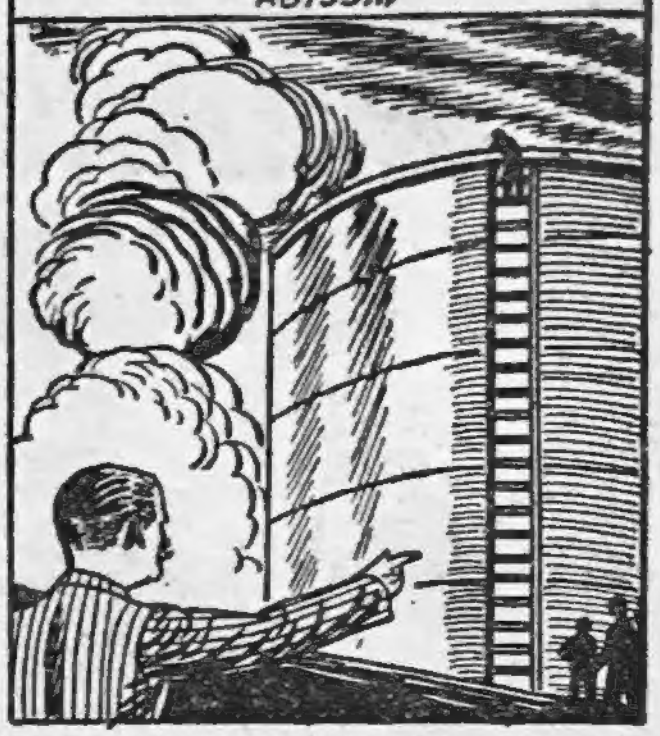
A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EAST ARRIVED IN AMERICA WITHIN 24 HOURS...HE WAS ALL BUT SPEECHLESS AS HE BEHELD THE AWFUL SIGHT...

THE EAST'S EMISSARY LEFT FOR HOME AT ONCE WITH HIS ASTONISHING REPORT...

SHIPLOADS OF SCIENTISTS ARRIVED IN THE WEST FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD! EVERY NATION WAS REPRESENTED... MILLIONS OF TONS OF CHEMICALS OF ALL KNOWN TYPES WERE DUMPED INTO THE ENORMOUS GORGE...

HYDROGEN WEAPONS THAT HAD BEEN HOARDED FOR WAR WERE NOW USED IN AN EFFORT TO COUNTERACT THE SOLVENT'S ACTION! IT WAS ALL IN VAIN...

A DAY AFTER THOSE VAIN, FUTILE ATTEMPTS WERE MADE, DR. ERIC NORATH CALMLY PREPARED A MIXTURE, FILLED A GREAT TANK WITH IT JUST 500 FEET FROM THE CONSTANTLY WIDENING ABYSS...



AS THE FANTASTIC SOLVENT REMOVED THE EARTH FROM BENEATH IT, THE TANK TUMBLED MILES DOWN, SPLIT OPEN, ITS CONTENTS SPREADING AND COMBINING WITH THE SOLVENT! FIVE HOURS LATER...

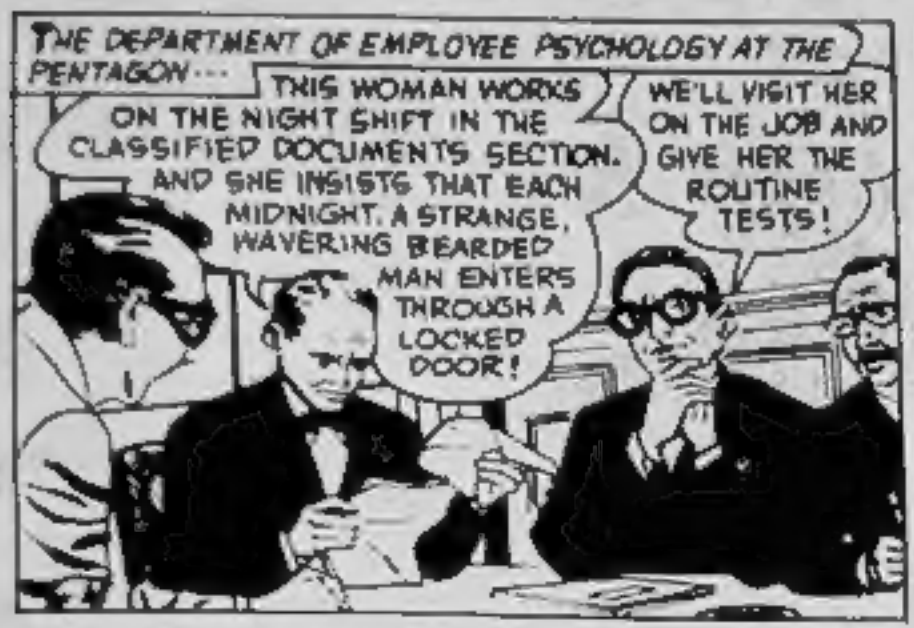
A GREAT LESSON, WHOSE HAPPY RESULTS KEPT GROWING WITH EACH PASSING DAY...

THAT SAME NIGHT, THE ELECTRIFYING NEWS WAS TELECAST TO THE WORLD...

THERE SEEMED TO BE BUT ONE OTHER PERSON ON EARTH WHO UNDERSTOOD, WHO KNEW WHAT WAS IN HER HUSBAND'S HEART...

The SEEING EYE!

PAUL GOLDMAN



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